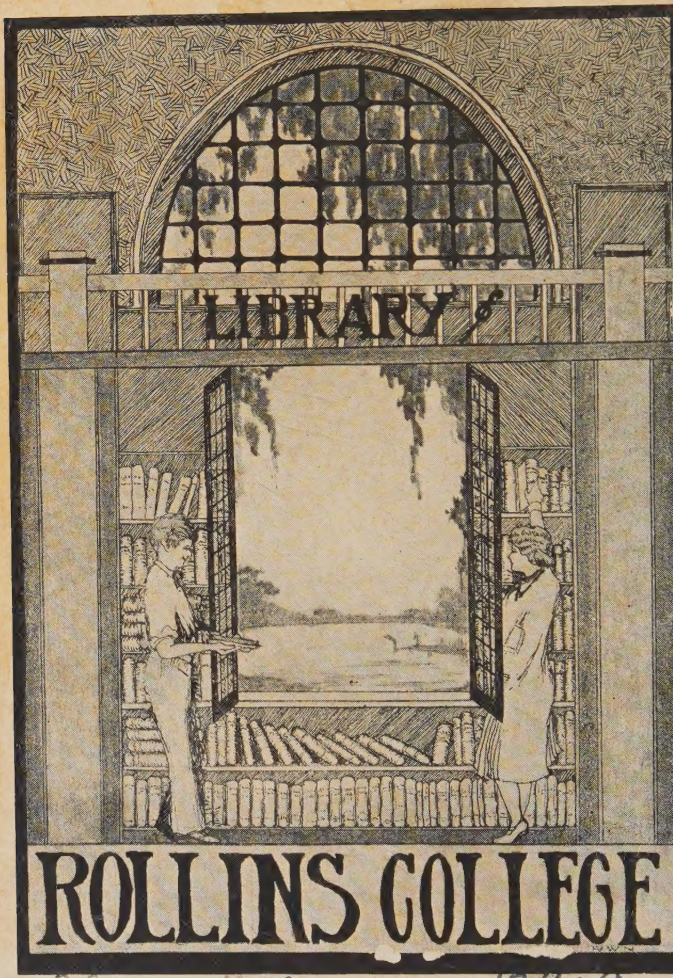
NARCISSUS

AN ANATOMY OF CLOTHES

GERALD HEARD



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NARCISSUS

AN ANATOMY OF CLOTHES

BY
GERALD HEARD

LONDON
KEGAN PAUL TRENCH TRUBNER & CO., LTD.
NEW YORK : E. P. DUTTON & CO.
1924

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"All Nature and Life are but one Garment, a Living Garment woven and ever a-weaving in the Loom of Time; is not here, indeed, the outline of a whole clothes Philosophy?"

"In all men's modes and habilatory endeavours an architectural idea will be found lurking—his body and the cloth are the site and materials whereon and whereby his beautiful edifice of a person is to be built."—*Sartor Resartus.*

"He that hath not mastered the human figure and in especial its anatomy may never comprehend architecture."
—*Michael Angelo.*

Printed in Great Britain by
F. Robinson & Co. at The Library Press, Lowestoft

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NARCISSUS,

OR

AN ANATOMY OF CLOTHES

INTRODUCTION

The Life Force is like a juggler; it is always contriving that we shall watch the hand with which the trick is not being done. When we look back, we often discover that it was the symptom we were studying, not the cause. And yet it is hard to learn. Next time we are certain we shall not be deceived; we will have no preconceptions as to what is important, what negligible. Everything shall be seen steadily and whole. It is of little use. Surprised at our own patience in considering it at all, we dismiss the clue without a misgiving, assured that it is a trifle. We ought to be learning that the very sensation of amusement at our own tolerance should warn us that we are being bamboozled.

Perhaps there is no subject of our thought which so well illustrates this as Clothes. One of the most successful London tailors remarked: "The men who give me most

trouble with their clothes are often men who never give an impression of caring what they wear." Surely such evidence should make us suspicious. Here we are uncovering an elaborate pretence. These men, probably ostentatiously straightforward in other things, are in this practising a sustained deceit. All their carefully staged indifference, their convincing evidence that they are quite unconscious of their appearance, is nervous camouflage. Behind their mask and domino of standardised respectability—" a gentleman ought only to be distinguishable when he is outside his own class "—they peep out anxious lest any other should pierce their disguise and see the intensely individualised self-conscious person behind. Every man pretends—that is, all the people who know they have something important to do in life—that he doesn't care for clothes. A man doesn't, a woman naturally may ; that is the difference between them. But the general acceptance of such an unargued conclusion ought to awake curiosity. Why this antithesis between decoration and use ? Is a tiger less efficient because of his stripes ? The condor is not incommoded by the colour of his plumage. To come nearer home, how long has this antagonism of use and beauty been accepted ? When did people begin to think a splendid and striking appearance

betrayed a poor and vulgar mind? Plato's cloak was so magnificant that Diogenes leapt on it. It was Mr. Brummell who had nothing to give his world but veneer, who ruled a gentleman to be well-dressed when no one notices what he has on. Henceforward it was to be enough for men to know that they were correct with all other "sensible men." So was to end the Age of Reason, Rogers at the one end reducing religion, and Brummell at the other fashion, below the unsettling level of consciousness and individual choice. There will be more to be said later, on this strange illustration of the Third Romantic Revival. Here we can note that occasionally, as time wore on, a suspicion did cross some mind long revolving the strangeness of his hardly-fellowmen, that clothes were more important than was allowed, that they might indeed be intensely significant. But Carlyle's Sartor ran away with him from an incipient science into gargantuan *vers libre*. The fashions, uses, and orders, the rituals, vestments, and insignia, like an unsubstantial pageant faded, and out of the dissolving wrack came nothing but the prophet's mouthings, a whirlwind of unsubstantiated denunciation. Again big William Morris exclaims with sudden insight: "How can this people expect to have good architecture when they wear

such clothes?" But this revolutionist only dared go as far as to show to his friends he had on a blue shirt and so, failing to follow up his inspiration, he remained subject to the two great illusions of his day, which took antiquarianism for art and thought of art not as a life but as a craft. The time however may now have arrived when a philosophy of clothes can be framed. Psychology, the science of behaviour, is resolved henceforward to treat nothing in its province as insignificant. It has learnt how to calculate for what astronomers call displacement. It knows that while the eye has only one blind spot the mind may be almost wholly occluded and the small remaining field of vision suffer from distortion. It has learnt to suspect, when people hurry over an incident in their recollection or think, because it was so trifling, that it slipped their memory that through the small orderly common-sense reclaimed garden of the mind has passed a trespasser from the hinterland. Still we may be too late; because we suspect that we have lit on a clue, we must be prepared to discover that we find the cypher's key when it is yesterday's.

CHAPTER I

A METAPHYSIC OF MODE

If, then, we may assume the psychological commonplace that the unperceived is *ipso facto* the vital, there can be no more striking example of it than the state of our clothes. We have treated them as unimportant, and so it is safe to assume that they are of racial significance. Men did not always—to use Freud's phrase—so "repress" them. Up to our time they took their importance for granted, not grudgingly, nor of necessity, but fulfilling the fashion of their age and seeing it evolved upon their children. The change of attitude among us we are therefore safe in assuming as evidence that we approach a Revolution, one of these cataclysmic jerks which mark the passing of a process from the control of the subconscious to the conscious. Unconsciously we bear witness to this. We begin to be ashamed of an interest in dress at the very time that it ceases to evolve. As clothing ceases to live as it lived till yesterday, as the last of the great Conventional Arts loosens away from the substance of our subconscious, we must become unpleasantly aware of it and, as is always

done, try to disregard the disconcerting thing. With it we are passing through the transition which turns a great convention into a science. At first the newly noticed thing, which generations have practised but this one alone become aware of, seems almost indecent to discuss, then frivolous, and finally of vital significance. Can we doubt, then, that costume as a racial matter, a clue to life itself, is worth studying? But for us it has as well a topical interest. It is in our time that the light of growing consciousness, which has analysed all the other arts and left them to eclecticism and science, has caught our very garments and begun to dissipate them. It is useless to attempt to except clothing from the broad and unbroken band of organic evolution which carries forward the whole gear of man from his retina to his spectroscope, evolving the whole of him, body, clothes, and tradition, first racially, then subconsciously, and finally self-consciously and on purpose.

In to-day's fashions, then, we can witness the survival of an elder dispensation and experience in miniature what it feels like to be present at the passing of an epoch. While we watch we see enacted in little, a microcosm of tailors' clippings, a clash of pins and needles, the secular transformation which, when Religion passed through it, from clash of swords and smoke

of burning gave rise to the epics of gospel and martyrdom and, in the turn of art and science, precipitated every creative wonder and inspiring discovery. Do we want to understand why good men persecuted someone who was only independently rational? Magnify to the heroic scale the gentlemanly feelings outraged by a solitary guest at some royally patronised house-party appearing at dinner in pyjamas. On the physical plane, Radium we have been told is a survival from an earlier form of matter. Clothes it can be shown are, on the psychological, as singular a continuance. In them and them alone there is at the present day what once has been but now is transcended in all the other habits of man, an organic, impersonal development, not analogous but homologous with his physical evolution. The very same force is being projected, and at first works on man's immediate environment, through him, as slowly as it has worked on his body. The further, however, it gets from the centre, the faster and more direct becomes the process. We cannot focus on a point between our eyes: to concentrate we have to put it from us. Is this to suggest that intelligence is a medium of the Life Force? That as soon as we get understanding and can take part we are allowed in our own province to take over? Well, orthodox scientists have

used the term Orthogenesis, which has a teleological flavour, and in so specialised a subject as the " Evolution of Mammalian Teeth " such an authority as Osborn concludes, " There are fundamental predispositions to vary in certain directions." I will leave it at that.

Yet the statement that in clothes we are still witnessing creation at work, that in the people's " Sunday Best " alone it is still not resting from its labours, that in a matter held so insignificant the supreme force of the universe is alone visible, that the same dynamo-design which once made our bodies for good or ill and now seems to have left them to be maintained at our costs or cut down[1], is still moving mysteriously though faintly in, of all things, our garments, the *ignis abyssi* smouldering but alone alight on of all unlikely altars a tailor's bench—such a contention may seem to the ordinary well or ill dressed man simply ridiculous. It needs defence, and not for that reason only : ridicule is usually evidence of misunderstanding. If it is true, clothing may claim as careful attention as the most crucial examples of evolution. It turns, in the losing of a lace, from a frivolous affair surreptitiously tended, like the worship of dispossessed gods by converts

[1] See references to evolutionary change on pages 154.

of austerer, loftier creeds, to itself the sole authentic survival of the entire life of the pre-individual ages and the only medium through which we may still see conditions as the immense past, still swaying us below conscious level, saw and felt them. If it can be demonstrated, the fact that demonstration is possible is proof that our entire environment's permeation is nearly complete. That permeation began when astrology yielded to astronomy and out among the stars tradition framed for the use of society melted before understanding which can only satisfy the soul. It cannot be completed, however, until there is no shred or veil between us and every part of the universe. Leave but a fragment occluded, undipped in the antiseptic flood of understanding, and it will prove a centre of reinfection, an Achilles heel making our invulnerability vain. Until we observe our bodies and the apparalling they project with the same interested detachment with which we now consider the great garment of the cosmos, the gem-work of the galaxy, our canon of truth is incomplete, the power to create cannot be granted, we remain medium and not maker. As we consider clothes we are then hot on the trail of the innermost secret itself, hidden as all supreme cryptists ever hide, under a disguise so paltry that none suspect so great a consequence

could have such cover. It will be recalled that, in the source-story of nearly all modern detective romance, E. A. Poe makes his hero baffle the whole police and official investigation Department by exposing the evidence for which they are searching and which he knows they will overlook. All true concealment, as we have seen, depends on making the seekers look elsewhere. We are on the point of completing that immense cycle which began when man knew that he was naked and was ashamed, and ends with the self-knowledge—the Greek advised but failed to attain it—which dares to look upon itself because, at last detached and past apology, it sees with creative insight that even at so close inspection there is nothing common or unclean.

In the following chapters I am therefore only attempting to extend the established idea of evolution. It will be assumed that evolution is still active, more active indeed than ever before, but at a different range, on an original circuit. As the whole idea declares, it must pass on. Why then seek the living among the dead? Reverence for the past, the belief that creation is over, seems as deeply rooted in the minds of some biologists as of conservative theologians. They see little change where they have been trained to look for it, in flesh and bone, and they are

too specialised to look for it elsewhere. The thesis of this book is that evolution is going on no longer in but around man, and the faster because working in a less resistant medium. Man becomes like a wireless valve, a transmitter which in the process immensely amplifies the current that he receives. When the Force that shaped all life evolved man, it seems that it kept him henceforward unspecialised, gave him, strangest of gifts, no vocation and equipment but, if not at one blow, freedom, innate opportunism. This was reserved for the favourite. To all the others their function and place. They sink into their groove, deeper, ever deeper; they run their appointed race; they become every generation more perfectly adapted to be what they are. Vague Trial and Error pass into the exquisite precision of instinct: restless wandering, physical preparation for doubt, distress and conflict, settles into a functioning so appropriate that by all to whom it befalls Nirvana is attained. Desire becomes ever obviously compassable until it follows unrest beneath the vast sea-level of indifference, and Life is justified in all her children: she has rounded their day in perfect completeness. But man she has not completed. That is her supreme bequest to him: he shall finish the story as he likes.

That man is uniquely uncommitted there is unmistakable physiological evidence. This lack of peculiarities, this perfect clarity of the medium, allows the Force to flow unchecked on to his immediate environment, when in all the lower channels before him and beside him it is caught and has to work out its purpose on the substance through which in man it flows to such greater achievement. Had man been possessed of strong features, either physiologically or psychologically, it may be assumed therein this shaping energy would have been caught and his evolution would have been nothing more than the specialisation and final establishment of one more animal species. But the huge brain is the finest conductor ever made, and lets the current through with ever less resistance, until with us it would seem that there is actual amplification. It is significant that the brain-tissue is the most unspecialised part of the body, with an almost creative power of repair and alternative function.

So we ought to expect evolution to cease in the body itself and to pass out on to the body's environs. It must be sought for there, and should be definitely recognised as Projected Evolution. The succession is unbroken from the core to the last leaf of fashion At first it will be carried out with a perfect imitation of the

method used by the Force when it worked directly, when the body and brain of man were wholly its medium, in no sense its partners. Then, more gradually than any dawn, a swifter movement will become apparent. Sequences are shortened, recapitulations cut out—there is evidence of a directness not possible to a force which has to follow the line of least resistance.

This projected evolution gains in speed until its aim become conscious—it can make leaps. In a widening, pulsating ring it affects, with a force and aim which increase exactly with the distance from the centre, the weapons, the dress, and the architecture of man. The organic relation of dress and architecture, the evidence of which is given in the succeeding chapters, is therefore perfectly natural; they are both concentric cortices of the rod of life whose pith is man. What flows through one must also express itself in the other. The outlook is, however, strange. Progress is indicated, but progress of a revolutionary sort. The study of clothes, the subject on which we are most self-conscious, suggests the rise of a complete self-consciousness. We foresee man become a creator through being a perfect medium, through offering no resistance to the full current, fiercely still at the centre, "moving all, unmoved." At a low stage of understanding we have to alter things to understand

them ; at a higher, we can grasp their complexity without wrenching them from their setting, emptying them of their peculiar significance and holding them in a laboratory. On the circumference of the Wheel we would grasp this sorry scheme of things entire to shatter it to bits, but at the Axis—?

These are matters of the abyss, and perhaps it seems almost in bad taste to glance down into such depths when we were only to watch a fashion parade, but we have no right to cut short our clue. It is nothing but the unravelled thread of common clothes, though it lead unbroken through the dim labyrinth of custom and instinct to the dark anabolic whirlpool at the centre.

CHAPTER II

THE SHIRT OF NESSUS

The connection between orthodox evolution and that of clothes conceded, it is necessary to trace from the accepted root the branches which at the top break out into costume.

Darwin's work made men's minds familiar with two tremendous conceptions. The one was the supra-personality of life and the other the vital utilitarianism of all human faculties including intelligence. Much that seemed, and no doubt is, the delight of the individual, serves the larger intent of the future, in which apart from his act of gratified obedience he will have no portion. The splendid displays of animals in pelt and plumage are, racially considered, nothing but secondary sexual characteristics. The patient research of another generation into the courtship of animals, to adopt Pycraft's title,[1] has greatly enlarged this conception. The dreary notion of a Nature driven to be red

[1] W. P. Pycraft, *The Courtship of Animals* (1913): dealing with mammals, birds, fishes, reptiles, and insects.

in tooth and claw has been largely balanced by the bright vision of a Nature intentionally red, blue, green, and yellow in tail and crest.

Such a tendency is of course Lamarckian, but now that the disagreement of the Doctors is less intense, we may be permitted to follow up the clue. Our next witness, as might be expected, is a Lamarckian pre-concordist. Samuel Butler has gone through the usual cycle of the heterodox. First he is heretic, next he is authority, and last he takes his right place as the man who must see the other side. Vestigial remnants he found as authentic in man's work as in nature's. "Tools," he concluded, "are detached hands." Lamarckianism may be anthropomorphic: it is certainly illuminating. The paw of the lion, the hoof of the horse, seen *sub specie aeternitatis*, are mutilations, even as the lopped right breast of the Amazon that she might draw her bow. The hand remains the great universal joint. It has kept probably intact its eocene indeterminateness. The mind has used everything in it; nothing has been sacrificed—save perhaps that second thumb?—and with this soft flipper, fringed with little shavings of nail but ill shielding an agonising quick, man has smitten all the mighty beasts from off the face of the earth before him. This small,

smooth creature appears a weakling only because we confuse mass with strength, volume with force, because we are so materialist that we hold, against the evidence of our own history, that the actual is everything. In comparison with us the Mesozoic monsters were no more than heaps of slag smouldering at the centre with a choked glow. Man is small because he is the burning-spot where the diffused aliveness of the Universe has focussed. Life in its essence is no blind head of steam prisoned and shaped by the unyieldingness of dead things, nor soft plasm flowing into chance channels whence it takes its forms. On the contrary, it is in itself infinitely inventive. There is no amazing extravagance that it will not attempt, nor any persistency of failure that can insure that it will not recreate some fatally sublime folly. Modern genetics is not disinclined to view the original germ as the repository of all subsequent variation, each released as opportunity occurs, some most splendid gifts and virtues indeed being able to emerge only by a checking of their perfect counterbalance. This may seem an extravagant notion; but take the simple illustration of alcohol. This drug was long mistaken for a stimulant: we know now it is the reverse. It neutralises certain checks, and if the personality is rich enough,

we have a Pitt, by swallowing three bottles prior to the achievement, saving England by his exertions and Europe by his example. A deeper consideration to guard us against dismissing the idea that the germ, when wholly potential, may contain every possibility of life, is the thought that size is nothing, and that, before it is released, power, as far as we can judge, may be reduced to a dimension where categories of space are scarcely relevant. The germ, for the very reason that there is nothing of it released, not an electron of its energy a-leak, can appear so insignificant. As soon as the breaking down begins, the world becomes overspread with lower, larger forms. Perfect capacity may mean perfect condensation, even below the limits of the apparent. The idea is not foreign to philosophy. Progress may yet be recognised as a matter of quality, not quantity. We are the only animal which, when given unrestricted supplies, has not become vaster. The energy has run through us, instead of accumulating in us. When we project our evolution onto the stars, we ourselves may be a pin-point. The fulcrum that moves the world may be atomic.

Such a pole, nevertheless, freezes thought, and, gazing at the point of convergence, we feel ourselves growing hypnotised. Turn round and we see radiating from it an

infinite variety of ways. This is the great discovery of post-Darwinian evolution, the innate inventiveness of Life. Launched on its discharge, released why or how we are incapable of understanding yet, it pours out an unceasing variety. Darwin showed that the teeming varieties of the world were all from one archetype, and more, that these swarms were but tattered streamers from the vast unbroken sheet—beside which Peter's was not even a pocket-handkerchief—which might have included in unbroken and evident kinship every animal from protozoon to man. But every generation the web of evolution becomes a finer, more pervasive substance. Its threads, like gossamer, float through the entire air. At first, no doubt, there is little but the slow method of cellular redistribution; as, before that, the colloids were built up even more slowly on a crystalline foundation. But this is an old, perhaps a vestigial, method. That strange and solitary thinker Henry Adams[1] in his "Law of Phase" thought that Life must be in its decline because living forms were at their vastest in the Mesozoic periods. With the physical accepted as the sole and simple manner of evolution, he could only

[1] See Chapter on Law of Phase in book entitled *The Degradation of the Democratic Dogma* (1919).

see the present stage as an ever-growing fever eating away life. He mistook the refining of the web for the exhaustion of the weaver. In his static age the full dynamic concept of evolution was impossible. That Life is an idea and not a structure was beyond him. But, accepting epigenesis, we must presume that, as Life by experiment discovers its aim, its achievement will grow ever more dextrous, more direct, more concise. It will eliminate the irrelevant, it will economise on what it retains, it will employ ever swifter methods.

So with the emergence of man we should expect to find evolution continued, but continued on wholly new lines. Is not this what we are finding ?

The slow metamorphosis which life works through the redistribution of cells, has, as far as man is concerned, been given up: Homo Neanderthalis is no ancestor of ours. His very hideousness, which was first taken to indicate his primitive rudeness, is now adduced as supporting his high degree of specialisation.[1] The stock we descend from may well have resembled us in physique very closely

[1] The frontal sinus' hypertrophy is a brutalising factor, while the teeth are more "taurodontic" than ours and so more advanced.

perhaps well into the Pleistocene period.[1] In short, we are smooth and unspecialised. We do not die out, it is true. We seem still to be the centre of Life's focus. Yet we do not modify. Dr. Inge outspokenly complains of this: we are not physically progressing. Let us grant it, if by Progress the Dean means getting larger and larger every aeon. Modifying we are, and this I believe to be, taken with our external activity, our true progress. Sir Arthur Keith has remarked that 90 per cent. of Anglo-Saxon jaws shut with the incisors edge on, 90 per cent. of ours have a tendency to overlap. In a millenium and a half that is a very sensible modification. Gross physical progress, as our extinct cousin from Neanderthal seems to point out, may only illustrate the Dean's own dictum, "Nothing fails like success." Indeed, stability at the centre, Napoleon's fixed point for manoeuvre, seems essential to the new way of advance, a way which is both more rapid and less irretrievable than the old, and which undeniably has proved irresistible. Our progress now is that of the current borne by a charged

[1] See Sir A. Keith, *Antiquity of Man* (1915) and Smith Woodward on the Piltdown skull (*Brit. Mus. Publication*). This, though probably early Pleistocene, shows far less specialised modification and departure from the present cranial norm than Neanderthal skulls from much later deposits.

wire: it goes on outside around us even more than at the centre of each. This is the final potency of gregariousness, when the inspiration dwells in none, but wherever they are gathered together there it is in the midst of them. Man has had his evolution projected onto a field which he can establish only in company with his fellows. The hand, therefore, is kept always ready, for, weaker than paw or hoof, its requisite is that it should be jack of all trades, so that its master mind may evolve not a paw nor a hoof but weapons innumerable, tools even more wonderful and wheels within wheels. There is never a break, only a revolutionary extension of the evolutionary principle. We are now able to trace the comparative anatomy of artefacts in an evolution almost as slow and impersonal as that of physical modification. Viewing them and their slow improvement, changes so unco-ordinated, tentative, and gradual seem to have budded from the stone itself, their development appears far more a matter of their own heredity than as due to external, deliberate shaping that might best serve a maker's purpose. No doubt use was secondary to the exact observation of traditional fashioning. Yet purpose condensed, drawing itself from the Past, focussing and creating a new thing, the Present, and so made possible the Future.

So the flint of stone-age man is a stepping stone equi-distant between our bodies and our machines, is equally a human invention and a materialisation of creative spirit. We can watch this working at first so faintly through man that with the eoliths, the colloidal stage of projected life, there must always be doubt as to human shaping. Thence ever clearer, stronger, swifter, more intentional. Here are real missing links, for they show that we are not only evolution's true purpose but heir. These literally are the marked stones whereby we may trace our way back, back from our ever consciously improved appliances, back from weapons and tools that carry, like the series of the bronze age axes, uneliminated what are among the earliest examples of "vestigial" beauty[1] back until metal merges into stone[2], back below the threshold across which to us now seems to hang the impenetrable veil. The clue is however in our hand. We have full documentary evidence, web of cloth, link of metal, stepping-stones from finest finish to rudest shaping, to prove our unbroken heritage from the spirit of evolution itself.

[1] The eye for lashing, though the holed head is now made to wedge perfectly on the shaft.

[2] The earliest metal forms always imitate exactly stone designs. See Reisner, *University of California Publications*, 1908, p. 127.

The Force, then, is ceasing to work upon man because it can now work through him. He has become its medium rather than its material. Through him it stretches out to an intenser evolution. Cumulatively speed is gained. Still it is intense only in comparison with anatomical advance. A whole aeon of culture, taking one of the best judges' opinion (Osborn, *Old Stone Age*) perhaps 150,000 years, separates the Chellean from the Magdalenian artefacts, and yet a man of the present day catching sight of them for the first time might hardly notice a difference. The new stone age moves it would seem at least ten times as fast as the old and yet its pace of progress has still to be reckoned in milleniums. The rise of metal-working ushers in a period of proportionate acceleration, a scale becomes possible on which, to us, generations are visible, and yet, as we have seen the advance has still in it more of imperceptible evolution, whereby physical change comes about, than of the revolutionary inspiration where, through individual experimental discovery, the single purpose of an object is divined and all irrelevancies are eliminated. We have considered the axe, man's striking paw, his first weapon—for the fist-filling flints of Chellean times seem justly called "hand axes"—evolving with every mistake

that ignorance of purpose can make and tradition preserve. We have seen that this is the reason why structural developments hang on for aeons after their utility has vanished and thence become the first buds of that exquisite autumn flowering, the strange and touching beauty that is yielded by vestigial remnants.

Like a golden lichen, it encrusts the stone no longer smoothed by use. There is a refinement which, when long desuetude has wasted rude strength, appears in the delicacy of exhaustion. Ceasing to be inured to one hard purpose, freed from its task as an instrument whose perfection is proved wholly by its work, it has time to become an end in itself, slight it may be but undeniably perfect. It is this fact that accounts for the strange association in our time of antiquarianism and art. The only art our late age knew was that of pensioned survivals and artificially respirated revivals. Taught to look for such, instructed that beauty could be recaptured only by living out of one's time and declining the methods of the present, it could not recognise the austere, archaic beauty which ferro-concrete creates with an unconscious necessity; for wherever any material is taxed to the utmost then appears the profoundest of all beauties, the geometrical. But the Use of our own time as far as building is concerned—and

in that is of course included not only architecture, where the engineer struggles under the belle-lettrist's varnish, but the motor and the machine—is too keen, too swift, too single-minded to let the *patina* that romance demands gather on its machined surfaces or to allow classical echoes to mingle harmoniously with its efficient orders. The division is dangerously wide. On the one side we have an ascetic devotion to use, so that the present becomes nothing and every design is scrapped before it can establish any individuality of its own. We see the idea of purpose supra-urgent, so that the forms it takes, because they still show an atavistic tendency to the particular, still fall short of complete interchangeability, fail to be perfect means, and are replaced momentarily by more relevant. On the other hand, we shall see that the unhealthy love of the glaze which overspreads and cerements the dead arts must, on the one that is last alive, express itself as the law of perfect finish. In contrast to a dominating desire, rending and remarking so that there is one great stream of style—examples and artists all lost in that flashing reciprocation which is authentic evidence of a Convention creating, the work and the idea in constant reaction so that each provokes the other to incessant advance—we have a style which prides

itself that it does not change, a style that lives thin as an iridescence composed of nothing but the mechanic spreading of a film. Its one concern is with surface and finish, and, as it has ruled that radical innovation is bad taste, it may claim in this ultimate accomplishment to have said the last word. Its perfection can be allowed if its sterility is established. So seen, Ruskin, who taught with such terrible effect that the present is incurably vulgar, is the patron saint of Savile Row.

A long way we seem to have ranged from cave-floors to the pavement of the West End, but it is necessary to realise how early appear the first signs of that tyranny of small things which survived only because they were disregarded; how soon was given occasion for professional beauty's quarrel with use, a quarrel which with its punctilious arrests still makes progress a constant battle. Later chapters will trace the growing extent of this veto. The price of power is perpetual exercise. As soon as any member is disregarded by the whole, it becomes a system of its own. This secession never ceases. As there is not enough blood to supply the body, so there is not enough vitality to inform the whole system; part is always passing out of use: it is the price of progress. For Progress is a fact. The aim of life is expansion. It is the very

speed of the centrifugal movement that causes the flotsam of narrower, archaic tides to be left like encircling ramparts, and makes those who watch the precipitation and not the process doubt advance. No more than a State sword would decapitate or a processional mace brain, could dentifriced teeth pith a cokernut or manicured nails gut a rabbit. But the greatest licence ever imagined is the romantic folly of going back to a Nature who is hailing us on. The thread cannot be respun onto the distaff. The only point at issue is whether the taste for ornamental vestiges may not be a decadence, not because we ought to rebrutalise them back into use, but because we ought to be without them altogether. That we are progressing there can be no doubt when we take this wider, newer view of evolution and see body, clothes, and house, brain, instrument, and platform all as one process, for already in power the little manicured finger of the modern is thicker than the loins of Neanderthal.

CHAPTER III

THE FASHIONING OF FASHION

We have dealt with the orthodox subject of Evolution, the tooth and claw, as detached and projected by the Life Force when it came to its master-complexity, man. We can now extend to the tail and the crest. The connection is never broken. As Life kept man from growing his weapons on himself so that he might become not merely a Briareus but *homo ferox*, become at a moment *homo faber*, so it stripped him of his thin pelt and left him with a wilted fibrous crest (the simians, the nearer they approach to man, lose any pretensions to beauty of coat) that it might crown him with glory and honour and infinite variety. The lilies of the field might out-array Solomon on one showing, but theirs is a livery and his an inexhaustible apparelling. For the same power that clothed them spun from the distaff of man's head every web, and wove with the flying shuttle of his brain cloth of gold and damask of velvet. These are as truly part of the bloom of life as the untouched flower's. Not less, too, is the

raiment part of the human life than is the petal a part of the flower's. Following the same principle of expansion, that which seems to bear when most plastic least character, hardens into shape and withers outward until, cut off by its successor from the vital centre, it falls obliterated.

Many still assume clothing to be something arbitrary, a civilised convention. Such is pre-evolutionary intellectualisation. Until yesterday man existed only as conventional man : without his convention he was a lost animal, and even to-day, on the verge of eclecticism, we find most educated men only too anxious, if they may not go back, at least to be left where they are. Progress we may be sure was never the intention of any individual ; it is far too unsettling. It is forced on men by the same power that compels them to die.

The history of costume follows undoubtedly this great impersonal design. Architecture, further removed, not so intimately informed by the common spirit, still feels the same inspiration. Their divergencies, caused by their different distances from the common centre, can be noted later. Their association, which William Morris perceived, though he could not apply his knowledge because of his misconception about machinery, is more deep. There is an element in

architecture, and it is most evident when this great art is at its greatest, which Professor Lethaby has called organic.[1]

The thing grows from sheer internal necessity, as has grown the chambered nautilus, and as in the shell, the force is projected in hard, measured and abiding shapes through a small plasm at the centre. But this problem is complex. It is no use to over-simplify in detail, however clear the main outline may be. In every good building we are faced with a subtle blend of the inorganic organised and the living in terms of mechanics. In the intimate, central term, the physiologic, we have in human anatomy the same problem, but the separation is complete. The structure was evolved and set. The elder decoration has vanished almost wholly, so that of to-day, costume, can develop practically free of any mechanic problems. In all but a few interesting exceptions, which will be noted, clothes are carried and do not carry. The display and the bearing of it are separated by aeons of evolution. This is not yet so in architecture, and therefore in tracing the connection between the two arts there must often be gaps in the narrative, but that the closest of associations does exist between them no one who

[1] See *Architecture*. Home University Library Series, 1912.

places their evolution side by side can doubt. There is one other curious principle which should be noticed here. It will become evident everywhere that we can trace in detail the connection of clothes and building, that change takes place first in the outer and so passes to the inner. This is perhaps not the sequence that might have been expected, but it seems that it is evidence of that very projection with which we have been concerned. At the transitional levels we are examining it may be that change can be effected only by environment being altered, and then that alteration reflecting back upon and so modifying structure. If that is so, architecture, being an outer cortex more environmental than structural, would be changed first. In building, however much he was working out a convention, man would be more direct, self-conscious, and inventive about it, because it would be further from him and he could therefore focus on it more clearly. Then the idea wrought in the immediate environment would reflect back upon the inner cortex, which, being more structural than environmental, must change more slowly and indirectly.

CHAPTER IV

THE DIVIDING OF THE THREAD

"Emergent" or expanding Evolution has now been traced to where the stark rod begins to burgeon and expand into that lovely complexity, civilization. Of stone-age man's costume we know far less than of his gear.[1] Furs, however, seem to have been, not unnaturally, his chief raiment, and herein we have a return to his past. Nature had stripped him of a decent coat, so he stole the other animals'. To one who made clumsy necklaces, probably[2] smeared patterns on his body and not till another aeon was to weave even basketwork, how impossibly splendid must have seemed the

[1] It may be questioned whether we know anything of it at all. Burkett in his *Prehistory* however gives certain drawings from cave-dwellings, which are dated as of the Paleolithic, and these are said to be of men dressed, probably for ceremonial purposes, in the pelts and masks of animals. Page 219 and illustration of Drawings from Combarelles and Altamira.

[2] For the validity of deducing primitive man's behaviour from that of the most primitive tribes' extant, see Carr Saunders *Population*, p. 131-134.

dappled, striped, and shot texture that flowed magnificently over his mangey flanks. But if the first costumes, like a Parisian mode on a Mayor's wife, by their irrelevant splendour must have paralysed even the attempt to understand how best to carry them off, the first houses, though for an opposite reason, must have been equally discouraging. Man seems to have been driven by cold to the caves. Therein he found himself environed by rock, a substance which must have resisted all his early efforts to shape it. Still, if he could not have an architecture, Altamira's caverns, the Dordoigne's and ever fresh finds show that house decoration was already within his power.

With the neolithic or early metal age we attain to weaving, and at once, as it were, we are at the source of two great rivers, the woven wattle rises into walls, the plaided cloth falls into garments. The lattice-work, which until wood is finally abandoned, must be the final term of all building, is still printed, like the shadows of the river-reeds upon the Zebra, on the wrappings of such backward peoples as the Kelts.

Thereafter progress is definite, and the two concentric circles enlarge but are never wholly out of touch. As the body settled down (evolutionarily speaking), weapons and clothes evolve. As the mind follows

suit, another ring is projected, and cities arise.

With this stage we reach the hem of history, and find the first precipitation of communities in the City State, and with Sumer, in age sole rival of Egypt (which because of its peculiar other-worldliness is dealt with later), we can say that the age of architecture has arisen. Patesi after Patesi is shown seated with clasped hands gloating over something in his lap. To us, familiar from childhood with Mesopotamia's later atrocious memorials, the true meaning of the object is an immense relief; it is the ground-plan of a building. Such passionate architects were these priest-kings. But, with mud for building, elevations could not have given equal ground for satisfaction—a stone gate socket was so precious that it required a special dedication—indeed the standard elevation seems to have been no more than the Egyptian mastaba, the parent-core of the pyramid, and, as we ought to expect, their clothing remained as simple. The "battered" walls, sloping broad-skirted from platform to base, are rendered in their costume by the quilted robe that spreads stiffly from armpits to feet. The basis of that architecture will abide in that country unchanged and conquering its conquerors. Even lofty Persepolis will be in the main a vast slope-sided

platform where the Great King—but lately sprung from a race to whom the saddle was throne, he who held the prize of the world, terraced Babylon—walks in stiff sloping robes and on his head wears the truncated mitre, model of the Mesopotamian Ziggurat.

The Assyrian Mitre.

The Mesopotamian Ziggurat.

But with the rise of the Minoan culture we enter a world of vigorous fashion. These Cretans are, from the point of view we are considering, perhaps the most interesting of peoples. The Mesopotamian settler, from whatever side he may enter, becomes swathed. Clothing must sweep down and conceal. Whether, if he had had hard stone and long timbers, instead of stacks of soft brick, with which to build in his formative years, he would have drawn up his skirts, girded his loins, and

delighted in his legs, cannot with certainty be said. The fact remains: his sloping, spanless stacks of wall and his curtain costume go together, and the first—which, as we shall see again and again, though the outer style, is the one which affects rather than is affected by the inner—was undoubtedly forced on him by his environment, while the other appears obviously unnatural, uncomfortable, and to all but an acquired prudery, embarrassing. Crete on the contrary, had everything that might stimulate invention. To get to it, these strange Minoans had to make well-built ships[1] and he who builds a ship has already learnt a great deal about trimness and the use of beauty, for the lines of ships the more efficient they are, the more they are lovely. Across the southern sea they came somewhere out of the land of surprises, Africa; and there still among some tribes may be traced survivals in crude barbarism of the most advanced costume the world has ever seen. For the amazing thing about their dress is not its elaborateness but that it is perhaps the only example of pure fashion, without any adulteration either of prudery or hygiene,

[1] Whether the aborigines had to cross to the island by ship when they came out of the root of Asia Minor, the people who brought the distinctive culture from the South must have been capable sea-men.

of dress for dress's sake. They seem to have had no need of clothing for protection, though they came from the South and certainly lived in their island anything but what modern hygiene—though they forestalled it in the heart of their great houses—would allow to be an out-door life, for with them the house became a town under one roof, below which the passages so wound and ramified that the great Palace of Minos is none other than The Labyrinth. Nor had they a trace of the Semitic notion of veiled decencies. Their costume was shaped to emphasise not to conceal their persons. We can trace the growth of this defiance, for there are already known small archaic figures on which the belt and trunks, which were to become the Cretan uniform, are still no more than a tightly wound loin-cloth. So, as this elaborate civilization grows, the men and women who shape it keep up deliberately a style of splendid exposure. They lived intensely and intensively. Matriarchy suggests, as would be but natural in the dense congestion of their palace-towns, that relations were so involved that fatherhood was too dubious ever to be trusted. Both men and women seemed therefore, to have been determined to face the facts: they would glory in their bodies. But this deliberate exposure is different from the romantic, naturalistic

exhibitionism that Greece long after was to practice. There is no infantilism in the Cretan manner, as in the Greek. These Minoans are intensely grown up, and so, whereas Greece could never have an organic architecture, though it attained a paralysing perfection of decoration—whoever gazes on the Parthenon is in danger of being turned into stone—the Cretans had an immense, intricate, original organic style.

But to have real insight into it we must complete our examination of the costume. What style on the smaller, intimate scale of their bodies do these people show, what attitude do they take up to life? We have seen that their principle was to wrap up nothing: exposure was their aim. They feared nothing, provided they might carry themselves boldly—brazenly the Semite would say. Like their ships, they are braced and strung and balanced so that their thwarted and transomed sides swell out to carry as a tall poop their breasts and shoulders and their braided heads. This figure-head poise is their most striking feature. Their heads are set back to counterbalance the breasts, which in their men as much as in their women jut like a platform and then fall away coving to a waist that tapers amazingly to no more than a lower neck. Again, the loins are thrown back to carry on the

head's counterbalance, and so the body, a series of extravagant counterpoises, runs down to the high-drawn close-bound boots. Everything was strapped and belted—the long plaited hair the men wound tightly round their skulls, the cincture which must have been bound on in boyhood and never relaxed, the close, gay-printed trunks, the long boots. That was their entire kit, but the most voluminous mantling, sweep of train and billow of robe, never conveyed more sartorial extravagance. To adapt Goldsmith,

"Pride in their port, defiance in their eye,
Behold the first Lords of the Sea go by!"

For it is no use to assume that this type of a shameless arrogance was an overstimulated decadent. He might live half his life in a close palace-town, but the other half had to be in an open boat. He was the first light-hearted master of the waves. His fleets swept all the Mediterranean coasts; Egypt sent him black mercenaries; he brought horses by ship; he trafficked and fought with Mesopotamia, whose Phoenicians were but beginning along the Levant to look out over the Great sun-dyed Sea; and Greece had to yield him the terrible tribute of youths to his base passion, the bull-ring. No one can catch sight of the biceps of the archaic "King"

who strides along on the raised fresco, glance at the perfect athletic development of the famous cup-bearer of the Minoan classic period, or, latest, at those great muscled, wasp-waisted bull-netters on the Vapphio cup, and not recognize a people well able to value, employ, and preserve physical splendour. The women, too, have the same magnificence; their display witnesses perfect organic development. The corset and the bustle are only to accentuate health, to make up to man what his eocene indeterminateness, his immense mental progress, had neglected of the physical aspect. Evolution moves *en échelon*, and we must never suppose, because we are the head and front of life, that just as we are, we are in torso and in limbs and at every point equally paramount. Evolution has mislaid many of its discoveries in the fossil beds—the armourirised lens of the ichthyosaurus for example. We have been taught to accuse it of slowness, but surely a sign of haste is that it has let fall by the way so many valuable inventions and beautiful fancies, and has hurried us on to the scene as precipitately as a touring stage-manager his company, which has had hardly time to dress and has yet to make up. We are always discovering how ill we know our parts, but we might improvise a little if only we knew that we looked all right. It is worth while

then, if we realise that the show has been rushed and ourselves presented when we were so far from presentable, to rummage in our spare moments in the original Green Room. Even to-day there are many beauties given to animals less overbalanced than we are by that great grey hypertrophy within the skull, which make them more comely. Who can look at a greyhound's flanks or the feet of the roe-deer and not see that we are flabby and flipperish beside such shaping and such poise. We must face the fact: without artificial aid we cut a sorry figure beside their beauty. No doubt we could not escape the faults of our virtues. We could not get a big brain any more than a business man a big business and think all the time of form. But now that we are arrived, we, like him and with a better chance, may try to make up for lost time and acquire what we can well afford, a carriage. It is absurd to censure artificiality. Nothing is more natural to us nor becomes us better. It is our forte—more, our *raison d'être*. Nor is there any danger in such extravagance. We are so far ahead of all competition that brain, to the entire neglect of body, may be left for a moment. Why should we be so physically *démodé* any longer? Alas, like business-men, we may have caught the passion and, all alien competitors under,

free to do anything, find nothing to do save compete mortally among ourselves.

At least Crete, on a much narrower margin of safety, tried to bring itself up to date. It lived dangerously in its not altogether contemptible effort to be in Life's full fashion, not behind the animals. Such fashion, far from being an outrage on health, is a salute to well being. If it errs it is by over-emphasis : it tries to make up for lost time too hastily. The *corpus sanum* attempting to catch up runs some risk, perhaps, of telescoping *sana mens*. For, however extravagant apparently, fashion is always a secondary sexual characteristic. As such, it must always be on the side of health, and the very obstacles which it seems to present are wedge and tackle to raise the mass. More wise than wool-wound vegetarians, it knows that life needs stimulation more than nourishment, prefers difficulties to indifference, is surer of itself in experiment than in routine.

Of such a people, original, restless, tense, defiant, we may expect a highly developed life, one which in its appointments was as curiously wrought and daringly planned as their costume. A people so unaccustomed to concealment would think about life and would proceed then to invent amenities others would utterly neglect. With such figures moving about, we ought

to expect to discover that they have made themselves an environment of somewhat extravagant decoration and elaborate custom. So we find their sinuously bound bodies are but the reflection of spiral and involute everywhere on the heavily painted stucco walls, while the patroness snake goddess with wreathed head-dress, ringlets, and flounced skirt brandishes her totem to demonstrate the link. Rectalinearity they disliked, and even when structure demanded a straight line the rhythm wound upon their bodies forbade. The ugly, down-tapering pillars are the inevitable complement to the astounding taper of their torso. Perhaps a hint of the same dominant idea may be seen in the hardly more beautiful amphorae, long inverted cones. So use is defied by life exuberant: the pillars are top-heavy, the vases cannot stand, the familiar claim of function is brushed aside, because Life is so sure of its own abundance that it takes pleasure in changes which could be carried out only by those who could afford the cost of "unreasonable" inefficiency. It is, however, only with the familiar that expensive jests are played. It is precisely because Life is at the full tide, longing to explore, that it places things on their heads, attempts impossible balances, and exchanges even the soundest way, when all others have been tried, for one remain-

The Minoan Pillar, Vase and Figure.

ing unused only because patently unsound. Such a temper is almost scientific: it is exploring just for the sake of discovery. So, while the pillar and the vase, old inventions, may be temporarily the worse for its attentions, new amenities appear. Crete, we learn, discovered the flush system of drainage. We may smile, but the Romans boasted the crude immensity of their cloaca maxima, and the importance of sanitary science, especially to a people living in such congestion, is hard to over-rate. This, then, was a great invention, fit to rank beside the steam engine, and it was a tragedy, the accumulated pain and discomfort of which can never be computed, that this great secret was lost for millenia, only to be reinvented and then so slowly adopted, in our day. (See page 100). Had this strangely modern, lost people not bound themselves so fantastically, tapered their pillars and their vases at the wrong end, crowded intensively under one labyrinthine roof, they probably would never have made this peculiar purely utilitarian invention.

CHAPTER V

THE CLASSICAL DISCARD

The importance of Crete is not exhausted when it has yielded the first and most vivid example of costume and architecture as concentricities of Projected Evolution. It also throws a revealing illumination on their successors, the Greeks. We have been so long dominated by these amazing mongrels that we have almost lost the power of judging them at all. Others abide our question : they are free. Until yesterday to the educated they were as above criticism as to the simple were the Biblical heroes. Making the canon, right was what they did. Yet their lives were full of inconsistencies. We were taught that they were light-hearted and oppressed with gloom, on the summit of culture and yet overclouded with superstition, and there were even deeper disharmonies, such as their concept of love, which were not even stated by their worshippers. In short, they were a revelation so sudden and dazzling that any attempt to analyse it was treated as impiety

The emergence of the Minoans has changed all that. As the curtain rises on

that magnificent perspective, we see the Greek is no sudden precipitation, but rather the end of a process. His naturalism is *ars celare artem*, his bright abandon forced like an exotic. His moodiness, his conflicts, his "back to nature" and "nothing too much," what are these but the signs of effete sophistication? He has no stomach for extravagance, and, though on occasion his depression drive him to drink, he cannot like a young man sleep it off, but the morning after records "Happy is he who dies young, but only truly blessed is he who never was born."[1] Obviously he is a *fin de siècle* creature. With the riddle of his temperament solved, the long puzzlement of the classicists seems as strange as their earlier refusal, because they had never seen any but weather-scoured statues, to yield to the evidence that their darling could ever have painted his sculpture. In spite of its immense influence, we are forced to ask, Is pure Hellenism a great gateway of the mind? Is there not something about it of the *cul de sac*? Certainly the Greek exhausted the atmosphere in which he lived and brought about that fatal analysis of life into the beautiful and the useful

[1] Theognis' *πάντων μέν μὴ φῦναι ἐπι χθονίοισιν ἄριστον* and the following lines were proverbial among the Greeks and echoed by most of their dramatists.

which deifies good taste and paralyses invention. Symptom of being more than a little *blasé*, the Greek cared above all for proportion. He desired balance at any price, even the price of being stationary. In architecture he thought purely as a mathematician. To him the perfect plan was everything, the urge of use nothing. (See Jay Hambrecht on proportion in Greek temple plans). The instability in which the organic develops, he disliked. The vital is always marked by a-symmetry, the anabolic must be top-heavy. The organic evolution of the Greek temple was over when it was still a wooden barn. This thing of posts, trusses, and tie-beams the Greek genius for finish carved, pared, smoothed, and painted, curved the stylobate, plumped the entasis, shifted ever so delicately and always with the most perfect exactitude the grouping of the posts. The whole thing was "perfectly turned out" and artificial to the last coat of smoothed-on stucco, the last wash of tinted distemper. Buildings are not to be lived in but to be looked at. Architecture is reduced almost to the level of ceramics. It was the apotheosis of good taste, but organically it was not architecture. Is it possible to account for this strange resultant? Building and dress fitted together yield a clue which may solve the problem.

The Greek's peculiar achievement was his paralysing discovery of self-consciousness. He wrote the disconcerting formula across the temple's front at Delphi, as though trying, at the spot where he had taught the barbarian to expect the last word in ineffective culture, to make a virtue of necessity. The Greek temple is the mirror of his made-up self. It will always reflect the sterile, disingenuous complacency of good taste. But where is the relation with clothes? It is most intimate because least apparent. There are two inspirations in Greek art, the elaborate and the simple (see Ure's *Greek Renaissance*). The elaborate is the elder: it is probably Minoan. It is intimately associated with elaborate costume (cf. the archaic polychrome figures from the Athenian Acropolis), and in the place of its origin, as we have seen, was part of a culture bound together with building in an organic whole. Among the Cretans the house really grew, so that they were civilised in a way which until the nineteenth century no society was again, and this high degree of domestic development was associated with a highly evolved fashion, so evolved that it resulted in that rarest of developments, modification and accentuation of the underlying anatomy. In the wasp-waists of both men and women we have an example of structural modifica-

tion wrought by costume, the body transformed by the garment it grew. This is a rare and interesting reaction, for we have seen how deep the division between use and beauty had gone in this relationship millenia ago. Specialisation had confined anatomy to stark use and given all decoration to costume, which equally was deprived of any structural use. Now suddenly we have dress " throwing back " to an animal earliness, before the separation of use and beauty, and, perhaps because since he became upright the abdominal wall has failed to develop adequate musculature, perhaps for the subtler reason associated with the vague problem of erogenous zones, we have the rise of the corset.[1]

This throw-back seems nothing less than a racial recollection akin, therefore, to other physical hypertrophies which are scattered about among varieties of men, and which, because of their exuberance, have caused the adoption of mutilative

[1] This should perhaps be qualified. If it is not a mistake to suspect that the constriction compasses an erogenous zone, it must be observed that the Cretan girdle is more akin to the acrobat's " strap "—the purpose of which is to give rather intercrural than abdominal pressure—than to the corset proper. But in either case the close combination of appearance and sensation should be taken into account. The Cretan " clout " quickly evolves into a cod-piece.

rites such as circumcision. One stage further back we come across the giant antlerage of the Irisk Elk and the tail of the Japanese cock, both secondary sexual characteristics of such exuberance as to endanger the survival of the animal on which they have grown. But the defeat of the original purpose may be only apparent. The Elk certainly survived as long as most of his companions, and the cock is living yet. These " difficulties " may simply act as a stimulant to life, and presenting obstacles rouse it to surmount them so that it takes by storm what undefended it might have lacked interest to attack.

In comparison with that intense close-wound stimulation, the Greek was simple, but it was the simplicity of deliberation. Evolution, it has been said, alternates between the complex and the resolved. The elaborate may have reached the highest point that it could and not lose all sense of direction, the convention of life breaking down into an individualised eclecticism for which the world was not ready. The Greek deliberately abandoned this richness. The first classic is also the first romantic. He is not the lovely, careless child that has never known the inhibitions of society, the dictates of fashion, the trammels of clothes. His nakedness was exhibitionism. He de-

liberately undressed. It was all part of his *kenosis*, even as he emptied his architecture of everything save proportion. It was for the eye alone. Significantly, his greatest achievement was in the Parthenon, the refinement of an archaic style.

There is not room here to trace fully the strange progress from the hermaphroditic archaisms, through the somewhat too animal athleticism of Polycleitos to the Farnese Hercules. As art goes toward Rome, the age of beauty is advanced. Greece itself showed progressive signs of infantilism, turning from the intermediate sex to sexless youth, and finally to an inane exuberance of prize babies, the first froth of putti-cherub senile sentiment. The work of this amazing people at the height of their power reveals an obsession with the idea of youth which is already morbid. Is not this an evidence of self-consciousness? May it not be explained on the supposition that the Greeks were the first people to realise as actually as they were alive that they would die? They had learnt to think; they had become individualised. Everyone knew that his time was short, so they made a convention of youth and left as little record as they could of age. They refused all help to growing old. With a pathetic bravura they threw off clothing as though to look

for the first lesions of decay. And yet in the main they lived long. Think of all the ex-athletes sitting loose, heavy, and shrouded for forty years haunting the gymnasium between their first death, when they could strip no more and had to be wrapped up, and that second they could only wait for with averted eyes while their grandsons stripped before them. They made life very short by failing to face or make any terms with death. They often lived for the best part of a century, but all save the first quarter they let death overshadow. There was never a people so overcast.

That opinion calls for defence, and Egypt comes of right into this inquiry. In the first place, was it not there and not in Greece that death set the mode of life? Were not that people preoccupied with it and conscious of the inevitable hour to the exclusion of all the days between? Let us see what their clothing and architecture, as far as they can be correlated, can tell. They are preoccupied, it is true, but not with death. It is life that fascinates them, though it be a future life, a life so vivid that, projected on the dark, it not only made the unknown seem familiar but this life of flesh and blood became a pale, preliminary thing beside that dazzling mirage. The line of death was well on the way to become as arbitrary as that of the

Equator; no doubt it existed, no doubt in one's journey one would pass it, no doubt conditions would become different when one was the other side. But of the absolute continuity of existence this side and that, no one had a shadow of doubt. We find, therefore, an ecclesiastical architecture beside which that of Medievalism was humanistic and the simple shifts that people go about in might be shrouds. This simplicity used to be attributed to climate: if so it was the climate of that other world in which the Egyptian really lived. Crete brought its tight cincture from the south. Sumer and Akkad, almost as torrid, are lapped in fringed and heavy-broidered garments. In Egypt there were cosmetics, jewelery, and wigs, but never the tailoring which such a high and permanent form of society should have produced. The architecture explains. The Life Force met there something from which it shrank. Clothing was ritualised and most people donned their full apparel only when they died. In death fashion does not develop. Where perfect preservation has been attained, change is sacrilege. The absence of any strong need for domestic architecture no doubt permitted men to think more sedulously of housing their gods. With domestic architecture an indifferent matter, sartorial development, must also be slight: hence temples and shrouds. Everyone

shaved, all shifts of ceremony were starched.[1] It is fitting that Egypt's sole contribution to pure dress should be this glazing stiffness, synonym of ceremoniousness, symbol of that arrest which they chose instead of the yielding advance which is life.

Let us finish with Greece. Its end is at Tanagra. Exhibitionism is over. The pathetic effort to make time stop at twenty-five is given up. Hellenism is going to face the fact of growing old. But it is too late to evolve anything. There is nothing for it but to swathe the little figures until one cannot tell their age. With all their talk of wisdom, they never evolved an art of life, but devoured a portion greedily and threw away in disgust the rest. They never could attain the mean between the careless animal and the overwhelmed man. This is the verdict of Hellenic architecture and costume taken as one. The conclusion is so unorthodox that perhaps it may be the better for support from authorities who would laugh at the way in which it has been reached. To Lightfoot the crystalline, inorganic nature of Greek building was unmistakable when he put it beside the crude vitality of early Gothic.[2] As a classicist, he would

[1] Flinders Petrie, *Social Life in Ancient Egypt*, pp., 100 and 106.

[2] *Collected Essays*, The Thirteenth Century.

have shrunk from calling the Arbiter of Good Taste a carver of cherry stones, but he recognised that the Greek lacked true invention, which with all its clumsiness Gothic had. After a scholarly Bishop, the next witness is from the opposite extreme. In his *Outlines of History* Mr. Wells is astonished to find that in Greece proper the thought of man is not really explorative. The philosophies there framed are made to fend off the real. The classical systems are too often designed *not* to make a difference. Plato is the supreme, exquisite obscurantist, the master of a good taste which for more than a thousand years paralysed invention.

The real discoveries were all due to the half-bred Ionians, and these we now have reason to suppose may through Caria and Rhodes be descendants of the shattered Minoans (Hall, *Ancient History of the Near East*). They started science and began the control of Nature which Athens ruled as blasphemous and the Academy showed to be unnecessary to a philosopher who had spun himself the isolating cocoon from his own inside. As one might expect, these really inventive outsiders were to the very close of their age always trying to do new and most questionable things with the closed canon of architecture. The Mausoleum, if reconstructions are to be trusted, is perhaps more magnificent

in word than in deed—still it was a real architectural effort, and its designer would have understood great building. The Rhodian Colossus stands figuratively spanning the great gulf of time that separates Daedalus and the designer of the Hudson Bridge. For discovery in plan, the great crescent of building at Pergamos, centred on the enormous altar—*ubi Sathanas sedes habet*, as the Apocalyptist remarked with the uneducated tendency to attribute any marvel to diabolic creation—shows a real advance on anything that Greece proper had designed. (See Blomfield, *The Mistress Art*).

This is a stepping stone, a great causeway, leading out of the Attalid ruin of Alexander's dream to the Roman reality of empire, and on it we pass out to their power of survey which advanced them above the nations. But though the Roman did much for architecture he did little for costume. He surveyed and passed on. He was too professional. He wished to get the whole thing laid out, but after that he lacked invention. He attempted too much. And here, indeed, we touch one of the main reasons for evolutionary failure. If there are too many lines of development, each becomes formalised. We have seen that there is never enough energy to keep the whole inspired. The original stream splits, loses direction and drive, and

chokes in a score of stagnant ditches. Everyone knows that there is not a vestment at the altar or on the bench which was not once a useful piece of over- or under-clothing. They will hang on now for ever as the withered leaves remain on a cut branch. Life deserts the pensioned and goes always with everyday wear. We may expect, therefore, that Roman architecture in spite of its engineered efficiency will lack something. By the time it appears Roman dress has become officialised; the single movement has become fissiparous. The world has thought of the Roman as the soldier: to that title there have been many races which had better claim, but none, not even the Chinese, have deserved more fully the rank of official. Rome incubates bureaucracy. The Roman departmentalised the world, and called in for each subject the expert. Naturally and fatally he went to the Greek for taste. They told him that much that he purposed was bad taste, that it simply was not done. The result was the silliest but the most respectable of compromises. The Greek was to keep up appearances with sham "classic" fronts, perfectly proportioned, and behind that screen the engineer was to build as grandly as he needed. So we have the great Thermae, wherein the magnificent structure achieves a compass never approached before, but

the whole splendid frame possessed of the grace of new invention is hidden away as something shameful, and within and without there is a contemptible pretence that there is nothing about the building but the Greek barn. Such an outrage could not but have disastrous results. Such persistent hypocrisy must fatally damage any idea. We shall see later that when, returned to Greece, the invention of Rome endured and the tradition being native was not considered infallible, architecture sloughed off its façades of stage scenery, and Byzantine building remains, aglow within, a mound of brickwork without. It is impossible to extemporise in a moment an exterior, and the Greek tradition had in Rome smothered what would have grown naturally from within.

The same sterilising standard affected Roman costume : it developed, as it was bound to do, as military and official dress. The Greek could only advise " Take off your clothes and be nice and natural." The Roman had no objection to watching a Greek exhibit himself, but he remained wrapped in his toga. The Greek, as Juvenal remarked, could turn himself into anything, changing even his sex, but the Roman felt he was a more stable type and was proud of his inadaptability. The toga does evolve a little : it becomes

'contabulated,' it is true, but too soon it was the garment for official receptions—indeed many provincials only wore it at funerals. When something more active was required, you could always get into military dress. Augustus adopted that as his ordinary costume. A military court always feels that it is rather bad taste to be seen about in mufti.

So Roman costume and architecture are aborted, and by coming to nothing give evidence of the blight of Greece. Wrapped in the toga like a shroud, the Latin world goes down before the cart-dwelling, bandaged barbarians. In the East there is a strange oriental afterglow. We have seen "Byzantine" architecture coming to rest in Greece—after the slow alternation that evolved it between Syria and Rome (see Lethaby and Swainson, *Hagia Sophia* and Bury, *Eastern Empire*) and there on the spot casting away the fossilised carpentry that had disguised it so long. The façade fell off, and no doubt there was not time in the few generations that were left to evolve another before a tradition as dead as barbarism should cover the eastern empire with a fog while the west lay in ruin and night. But there was another factor that made for a certain approval of plainness. The New Rome is not Byzantium but Constantinople. It is not Greek but Oriental, in religion, in

morals, and in art. Greek good taste and exhibitionism are both banished, never to return to the place of their birth. This is the real east come again, and it cries as ever: "cursed is he who is exposed"; "cursed are they who to make themselves acceptable in their nakedness received the mark of the beast Epiphanes in their bodies." A swathed world wraps its architecture up, and the promise of austere organic building springing from the great creation of Anthemius and Isidore is never fulfilled. There is nothing but the desert to follow. Leo the Isaurian from the Mountains breaks the images, and round about the narrowed confines of a provincial empire the obliterating sands of the waste drive and silt.

CHAPTER VI

ORIENTAL RATIONALISM AND OCCIDENTAL SAVAGERY

So swathed from the stoles of archimandrites to the cross-gartering of vikings Europe abides for centuries; and, while it remains too weary in the South, too restless in the North, to grow or gather any distinctive moss, we may glance at China. There at once we see we are faced with a people who for some reason are rational, consciously utilitarian, in a way that we have hardly ever attained. They evolved early a rational dress which can hardly be called beautiful, as it is neither gravitational nor anatomic, neither following the body nor the fall of texture, but avoiding both extremes; and, having evolved it for use, they have changed it little. When they require garments of State, there can in consequence be little variation in cut, for tradition is alive everywhere and not preserved solely in official wardrobes: so their only variety is in splendour of embroidery, a quantitative not a qualitative difference. Architecture, too, evolves little and is mainly for use. It is true that earthquakes are supposed to have daunted the Chinese architect, but the minds that can have set up the Great Wall would not

be easily discouraged, and certainly in Europe such places as Messina, and in the Far East Tokio, show that the fear of everything being shaken down on one's head does not prevent ambitious building. The Chinese are always strangely interested in finish. They are a people who seem born refined, reflective, recollective. Always re-copying their own styles, they seem to pursue endless cycles of objective taste, until straightforward evolution becomes impossible. And the types themselves are curiously stable. In other cultures there appear always to develop definite extensions from an original theme, and every point of primitive use sprouts into decoration, so that the functional shape is often hidden under a mass of aesthetic foliage. Utility is but a seed from which styles grew. In China there is no such radical development. The very love of finish caused successive generations of artists to be content with advances which we should consider insignificant. They did not, as is the European way, rush headlong to an extreme and then, further advance impossible, retreat through generations of uneasy discontent. Every possible modification, however slight, whether of texture or proportion, seems to have been dwelt on and worked out utterly before they thought of moving on. They have a different time-sense from ours. The

wish to arrest is therefore absent, and the baroque is never needed. The vase remains with the simplest of necks and often with none, and all the obvious opportunities of handles and spout are disdained. The common jacket has neither collar nor lappel. The robe reaches far enough for protection, but never develops the splendid inconvenience of a train. The shoe worn from Mukden to Canton is the plainest and the most practical with which man was ever shod. Any trace of excess can, I believe, be shown to be imported. Certainly there is an exquisite extravagance of all Chinese themes when introduced into Siam and Assam. The edges of the robe are affected by flamboyance, twisting stiffly, and the pagoda pattern, architecturally a common-sense construction, gives rise to a fantastic mitre. Such developments among neighbours less severely rational, suggest that the long, filagree-encased nails, which the Siamese love to exaggerate with gilded fingerstalls, the tilted roof-corners and the grotesque " heraldic " figures, may be survivals from a barbarism which the cultured were too reverent to leave wholly without witness, or importations from the lower, more restless peoples who surrounded them. Certainly the fetish of the little foot is foreign. This, I have noted elsewhere, is evidence of a racial memory not

necessarily of quadrupedness but of an approach from the back and a crouched attitude. The bound foot of the Chinese woman is shaped and shod so as to resemble a hoof, and is a late importation. It may be as late as and associated with the "horse-hoof" sleeve and cuff which conceal the Chinese hand and are said to be a Manchu totemistic fashion, as they, through their irresistible cavalry, mounted the celestial throne from horse-back. What more natural, then, that the heightening of sexual charm should be obtained by a distortion with the same tendency? A race-memory of immeasurable age was roused by the recollection of late national glory.

So much for the East, for Japan copies China as Rome imitated Greece, though in a manner which is a strange commentary on the more familiar partnership. Imperialism in the Far East is the fount as well as the distributor of culture, and nationalism learns from it. Had Rome but mastered life so completely, it is legitimate to wonder whether it need ever have fallen. Indeed, the influence of China is so comprehensive that there are only two original influences in the whole of Asia, the Mongolian, which the Chinese have made classic, and the Aryan.[1] That,

[1] Or Wiro. See conclusion of Peake, *Bronze Age and Celtic World*.

in its home, can never develop as a whole, for part settles into squalor and part as inevitably sublimates into transcendentalism. To evolve homogeneously, it had to come to Europe and to continue studying that branch we return thither.

The Dark Age every generation circumscribes; but certainly organic design, the interactive growth of costume and building, is at a standstill throughout the continent from the sixth to the tenth centuries. The fire of invention was for a space choked by the landslide of life. It is never extinguished. It smoulders visibly all the while at Constantinople, and the Exarch of Ravenna can do the place up in the new style. But however much our age may entertain a natural weakness for the archaic, it should not blind us to the fact that the mosaics of Justinian, Theodora, and their court display the fashions that the architecture and carving would lead one to expect. Gainas and his Goths may have been massacred, but the creeping paralysis of which their presence was only the symptom could not be loosed so easily from the imperial organism. It was suitable enough that the marble factories of the Propontus[1] should have turned out—in the style that Birmingham to-day provides North Africa with brass-

[1] Lethaby and Swainson, *Hagia Sophia*.

ware—capitals for the basilica of the noble savage Theodoric; but surely there should have been evolved something less crude with which to adorn the legitimate Empire and the great cathedral of the Holy Wisdom. But as Morris said, with such clothes what could be expected?

CHAPTER VII

EVOLUTION RESUMED

All to the North there was nothing but boarding[1] and weaving, architecture and tailoring had yet to come. The tribes were still living in huts, which were merely pallisaded tents or caravans that had settled. By the tenth century, however, there are the first unmistakable signs of dawn. At that time there is a strange stirring in the embers at Constantinople, and it seems possible, from architectural evidence, that, had any real life remained there, the Renaissance might have had as the city of its nativity not the old but New Rome. For the end of the Dark Age is the beginning of the Renaissance. Medieval culture is that much of a new creation which orthodoxy could colour and cover. Continuously from Abelard to Descartes the focus sharpens. It is one process. We make two of it by dwelling on the inessential moment when it became clear that through the Church's projected tradition another irreconcilible system was

[1] The Saxon word to build is to timber.

evident. The Reformation broke nothing but the Church. The official Renaissance was not the re-birth, but the coming of age.

The Danish raids closed Europe's period of alluvial inundation. Above the shifting dust-clouds of wandering lagers, behind the billowed sails of driving fleets, settled conditions begin to appear once more. The amalgamated peoples found the little monkish imitations of Roman work, and into such rude models of decayed imperialism they breathed the new energy, and the immense, heavy arcades such as Gundulf the Weeper raised indifferently for Church or Castle through England reduplicated themselves over Europe ; as a child handling its first pair of compasses does not tire of describing circle upon circle until it has covered every surface on which it can lay its hand.

A strange interlude is caused by the Crusades. Just as it seemed that the restlessness was to crystallise, a counter-wave sweeps the West, as though the barbarian tide beating on the limit of the world was flung back resurging to the East. But, in fact, the precipitation goes on uninterruptedly. The influence of the re-migration is difficult to estimate. Some see the Nordics go South-East athletically dressed and cropped, and come back voluminously swathed and ringletted.

This seems extravagant. A few exceptions may have been so influenced, but they never stabilised the tendency. Of the total population much more than a half must have stayed at home. Of those who set out, could, from that bourne "more than half way to Heaven or Hell," five out of every hundred have returned? No doubt by the time that the first were straggling home, too weary to have any wish save to see it and go to the Heaven they had earned, there was a change in the fashion of things, but it was of a sort that the returned soldier does not initiate. There is another hypothesis which may explain in a manner more consonant with our knowledge of genetics the revolution in style. Briefly, it is that the artist is actually the child of the invader by the woman of conquest. There is genetic evidence to show that in several species males from a northern environment bred with southern females, have as offspring a definite proportion of intergrades.[1] There is anthropological evidence that points to the not very surprising conclusion that, when conditions are unusually severe, the sexes become strikingly differentiated to their several and lowliest purposes (e.g.

[1] The work of Crew in Edinburgh and Goldschmidt in Berlin (*Royal Soc. Proc.*, 1923), is making the whole of this question no longer a problem in morals but a physiological fact.

Homo Neanderthalis), and that when they become more genial less extreme types can survive.

Finally, history suggests that the invariable appearance at a certain stage of the priest-artist is because civilisation necessitates specialisation and real specialsation postulates a genetic variety. Whenever a society is about to become a civilisation it begins by producing celebates. This "segregation of the best stocks" has always been a stumbling block to the old-fashioned Eugenist, but the fact which seems to have an inevitable naturalness about it must be faced, and perhaps, though this is not the place to discuss it, the "best stocks" might after all not prove the best for stock purposes. (cf. Dr. Bateson's Herbert Spencer Lecture: "Biological Fact and the Structure of Society," p. 13).

There is no doubt, however, that civilisation had been revitalised. The new race's energy was so immense that simultaneously it raised from ground-level a culture throughout Europe, and with its exuberance challenged as an equal a not less vigorous society in Asia. That there must have been an unparalleled release of power is evident when the social evolution can leave, of its expansion, during a short century, the quarries' heaped accumulations which mark the

Romanesque, and of its economy, the invention in 30 years without apparatus or education of an unprecedented style which took three hundred to exhaust.

But the problem why these particular three generations should have brought about such a revolution, remains. Gothic is not imported from the East. The most likely explanation seems that the third creative generation was also the third from the crossing of conquered and conqueror. The artist-intergrade is the result, and his invention Gothic. It takes three generations to give him his chance. He may well have been present in the second, but think of the reception that such would have had when all "his father's side" were on the look out for the sinister effects of the left-handed marriage. It takes three generations to make a gentleman because it takes three generations to stabilise any type. It took the same three generations to turn sheer building into architecture and the possession of "forty changes of raiment" into a wardrobe. The artist at first swayed toward femininity[1], and we have, with the full dress and the long hair, the climax of the Virgin Cult and a maximum

[1] Cf. Orosius. Intergrades first imitate the opposite sex to that in which they are classed, until, the recoil over, they are free to evolve their own secondary characteristics.

influence of women. The complementary masculinity of women is shown by such characters as the Queen who called herself "Eleanor by the Wrath of God," by the Empress Matilda, and by Queen Blanche of France. The Courts of Love, the troubadour, the jongleur, the schools are all evidence of the easier conditions under which life, as ever, is losing no time in devising its infinite varieties.

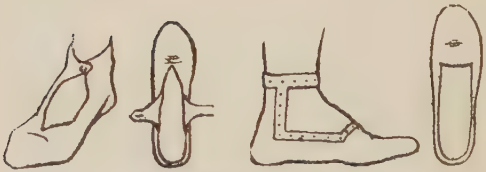
It is then that Gothic appears (1175), and within a generation has begun to react on costume. It has been noted that there are two great divisions of costume, the gravitational and the anatomic. The gravitational, which of course is the earlier, obtains its beauty by the fold which various textures take. The Greek had great appreciation of this, with the pleating of fine linens and the laps of heavy woollens—because of his cult of simple exhibitionism he never advanced to the anatomical. If he had, it is hard to believe that he would not have become, instead of a decorator, an architect. The Early Kelt also admired exclusively "the flowing drapery" and never learnt to build anything but huts. But at the dawn of the Middle Age dress has already been affected by architecture. Before Romanesque ends it flowers in a strange florid fashion as though it were about to die (see for example the Abbot's door in Ely

Cathedral ; it might easily be mistaken for Keltic work), and this ornate close of a severe style is paralleled in dress by the voluminous costume and the long, curled hair. As the new energy was at first content to be but energy, fulfilling, enlarging and enriching old models, and then, the whole impregnated, a new style was produced altogether, so the athletic kit of the man of action becomes first enriched and voluminous, and then, as suddenly conceiving the economy of art, becomes a matter of fit, displays instead of shrouds his anatomy, and the tailor takes his place beside the architect.

That " Gothic " is a Saracenic invention brought north by returning Crusaders, it is—if this analogy is anything but chance—impossible any longer to believe. For the Mohammedan inherits the racial Semitic horror of physical exposure and would never don the form-following fashion which is Gothic's counterpart.[1] The pointed arch, the slender shaft, the perfect balance which by boldness of

[1] The real problem is " Moorish " architecture. Can a Semite even in later days evolve any architecture other than the eclipsing dome ? It is worth noting that the ponderous cover which, in spite of Anthemius' span, is crouched, lifts to delicacy as it draws away to heretic Persia and even more Spain. It may be that the Gothic freedom influences occidental Mohammedanism and not vice versa.

Natural Semicircular Arch (Romanesque)
up to last quarter of the 12th Century.



'Natural' Shoes of the 12th Century.

Four Centred Arch of late 15th and early 16th Centuries.

Sableton of the 16th Century.

Solleret, end of the 13th Century.

Lancet Arch at end of 12th Century.

spring and precision of thrust, as dashingly assured as a marksman's arrow, attains a poise more firm than the clumsy inertia of rubble-filled piers, began to reflect themselves on the person of the builder. The pointed arch and the pointed shoe advance together. Swiftly they reach their common climax, when the toe of the solleret has to be looped to the knee and the arches of Westminster seem, making a second floorless church above the capitals, almost to crush the brain. Then slowly, looking backward, taking three times as long in retreat as in advance, toe and arch-apex broaden down until the sabbeton and the four-centred Tudor arch are blunter than the round from which 350 years before they sprang. Long hose translates in anatomy the clear-standing shaft. Rapidly the architect strips off the inessential, daringly denies bulk, and, rearing pillars of wrought masonry throughout instead of rubble-filled drums, gives grace for mass. Nature had already given man such legs that the Psalmist had definitely, as a true Semite, to declare that their Maker did not delight in them. The tailor could only unveil as on him worked the imitative passion to translate in terms of his own art the invention of the architect. Tights sweep clean up to the apex, round the athletic arch of the thighs, to the trunk borne like a tower above the cross-

ing. The tunic, to display this, the final organic architecture, shrinks into the jupon, a body-glove, and the build of man, though his flesh be covered to his palms and chin, is more visible to every eye than ever since the closing of the Gymnasium. This is the high-water mark of the revolution whose cycle we have traced already on the small scale of the shoe. With the passing of the first perfected native style (Early English) retreat sets in. By such a term, however, there should not be suggested any lack of force or effeteness. There is no sense in calling harmony a decadence from unison. Rather up to this point the stream had burst out a single jet. Up to the last quarter of the thirteenth century architecture fuses engineering and decoration. Thereafter each develops so that each has to become to a separating extent self-conscious. To the close of that century tailoring combines rational dress—the desire to be covered yet untrammelled—and daring fashion, the wish to go ever one further in display. In the next generation the limit is reached —everything is exposed. But in a live age fashion does not stop merely because all use and need are adequately met. It becomes conscious as fashion per se. It deliberately seeks variety. It initiates change not because tailors can cut better

and fit closer, but because the tailored are tired of looking the same.

The turning-point is marked by a small but definite crisis. As the shoes curled up to the knee, the hood's point followed suit as naturally until the lirripipe touched the ground. The limit of any extravagance derived from the useful had been reached. It might be coiled round the head and so a foot or two be gained, but—fatally restricted between the head which gave it its *raison d'etre* and the ground which decreed thus far and no farther—its end was appointed. In an anabolic age, however, beauty is recognised in extravagance, and when that age becomes self-conscious then the supreme criterion of taste is invention. That this is not so to-day, that good taste considers innovation vulgar and believes beauty to reside on the whole in vestigial remnants, is a serious matter. But from the point we have reached that condition was still some centuries distant. It was here then that a sartorial audacity was committed which our age would be impotent even to imagine, far less to adopt. It must have been an individual act, this break with continuity; but it caught on at once, so we know that the individual was only interpreting the need of his fellows. The hood which men had worn for generations as the most stable part of their costume was suddenly, with its

appurtenance of lirripipe and tippet, snatched off. The head is thrust into the mask, the dangling neck and shoulders swept up into a crest, and the whole made fast with coils of lirripiping. Such violence with tradition marks the end of the naturalism which in architecture had gone on steadily from the Herba Benedicta of Early English to the botanically correct though often decoratively valueless stone foliage of the Decorated Period. The carver, like the cutter, had found that he could copy at last whatever he saw, the one in stone, the other in flesh-fitting cloth. Both tired of that least satisfying of powers, technical mastery, and took to devising arbitrary inventions. But while a firm of architects could still develop behind set patterns specialised engineering, while that new sub-division the Decorator even gave fresh occasion, by screening, by fans, by the complete cleavage between the evident ornament and the concealed structure, to the engineer, provoking him to solve behind the scenes the legacy of entailed mathematics, the tailor could only accentuate and exaggerate the structure which was given.[1]

[1]Note : even in this he seems slow in following Crete into corsets, though, to judge from the fourteenth-century brasses, man must have begun to suffer constriction of some sort as soon as he saw himself in the jupon.

So, under steadily flattening vaults, shallower mouldings—this is the period of the caveto—sparser, more mechanical ornament—witness the square and the "Tudor" foliage—through windows of stiffened mullions and, by order of the specialised glazier, ever more inorganic design, man may be seen inventing this fantastic hat, the "Chaperon," whose fashionable points were remnants of its past uses, and to match it a gown, the houpelande, to accentuate his figure. Full of pleats it was and buttoned to the chin, and, though the old might shelter themselves behind a certain not unfashionable fulness, the young, who of course invented it, displayed its real purpose when the converging pleats diving below the close-strapped girdle appeared but as a waist-accentuating frill. Thence downward all was as Chaucer's priest saw and shuddered at, frank display of limbs with a cluster of ribbons at the centre to flaunt at those who maintain clothing's for cover, dress for disguise. The Black Death has passed over the pageant, and, though half Europe is dead, and the Religious are somewhat more gruesome, the remaining moiety is still so full of life that it seems to spring the lustier for such a pruning.

The Chaperon, an obvious makeshift, cannot long remain unmodified. Even in the fifteenth century there was evident

the first signs of that admiration for professional finish which to-day, even to producing mis-hand-crafts as foils, dominates our sense of fitness. Even at that date the "made-up" article can win in the market, and, as the upper classes were yet to become sartorially conservative, appear at Court. When the Chaperon became everyone's head-dress and no longer the exclusive coxcomb of such as felt the day well spent in tying it, the "made-up" was bound to succeed. Such is the Round Hat of Lancastrian mode, with all the flounced exuberance of the scalloped tippet-edge shrunk to the stiff conventionality of a cockade. Indeed, man stiffens throughout. Round hat, hair cropped to the ears, armour in an ungainly old age, arthritic and warted, there is a great change obviously near. The hat itself, by its future career, is evidence that something strange is about to happen in the history of clothes. It declines onto the shoulder, and there on the Garter Cloak, safely pensioned, never to grow into anything else, never to give rise to the long procession of head-cover which hovers over advancing man, it lies withered, shrunken, an ornament. It has become part of that half-real thing State Dress. Thus we come upon another bifurcation, another division of the once simple energy. At the thirteenth century's

close, use and decoration split: with the decline of the fifteenth dress begins to throw off, like suckers, official costumes. For some time the Church had done this. More anciently organised, by nature more conservative, it had shown the State the way. Eucharistic vestments are relieved by processional and these again by a compromise with lay costume. There is therefore now and henceforward a home for superannuated fashions, and the whole process and advance of fashion becomes complicated by the imperfect elimination of these survivals. They used to hang on slowly withering—like the false sleeves of the fourteenth-century men and women—sometimes modified into the main web of fashion, but mostly, when life is full of invention, cast off utterly by the force underneath, whereby shirts are always on the way to becoming cloaks. Henceforward they will have a sort of Heaven open to them, a state after the use and hustle of life, where, made in more delicate material, of neater and unchanging shape, they become part of a uniform, their uselessness advanced as proof of their beauty.

The Tudor Age, ushering in the Modern, shows the full development of the division. State Dresses multiply, and their complement, sumptuary laws, once a concern of the Church, are taken over by the bur-

eaucracy. In future, plain dress is not to show contrition but caste. Crowns are definitely reserved for nobles. The ordinary man must wear homespun (though, aggravating fact in a world already on the turn, he probably can afford velvet), not for the good of his soul but as a foil to his betters. Ordinary dress, the real everyday thing which a man lives in and therefore moulds, makes one great effort at naturalism again. The hair grows long, a small cap is worn, the neck and, rare exposure, the bosom, appear with no stock or collar rising above the down-lapped tunic. The hose rises like a tide again, flowing to the full height, only breaking underneath the breast. It will not rise with such a sweep for another three centuries. The shoe hesitates before splaying into the Sabbeton. It is a last, exquisite effort toward naturalism, or the first romantic revival (the others are of course the Jacobean style, the "conceits" and the cavalier dress of the first half of the seventeenth century, and the Gothic revival, the return from the wig to rough, natural hair and all the nonsense of the "natural man" of the close of the eighteenth), as you care to look at it. If one considers it the first of a series of efforts (as the pseudo-archaic of Hadrian's time was a brief hint of the Renaissance), it falls into place as naturally the shortest; the two succeeding

stages being proportionally lengthened. But, even considering its brevity, I believe a corresponding development may be noticed in the architecture immediately previous to it, though, because of the shortness of the time this vestigial phase takes,such a rigid art as architecture cannot be modified fundamentally and the period itself being one of considerable civil commotion over large parts of Europe, extant examples are rare. Some of the churches in Norwich and the church at Thaxted in Essex seem, however, to bear evidence of this.

CHAPTER VIII

EVOLUTION CONVOLUTED

Then at a step, Medievalism is over. There is a revolution. The coat, wide-shouldered and full-skirted, is here, the coat which in spite of a counter-revolution or two will remain on our backs until we take it off to-night. That strange compromise between the gravitational and the anatomic, which is the characteristic of the modern age in dress, has come to stay. Below the skirts of "coat and vest" the codpiece struggles out, and then in despair widens into trunks, which year by year creep down the leg toward the broad shoe. Surely the primal energy is being deflected. By 1500 Architecture had entered on a phase which renders it finally pure eclecticism. Clothes, being closer to a man, he is usually unable to look at as detachedly. Indeed he finds it very difficult to focus on them at all, but the change in the sister art must presage a corresponding change. Indeed the *en échelon* advance of architecture which has been noted throughout, has here perhaps its most striking example. The last phase of Gothic is dominated by

The typical "four-centred" or Tudor arch of Gothic's last Phase.

The square cap worn by Henry VII, Bp. Fisher of Rochester, Sir Thomas Moore, etc.

Becoming after the flat cap, note the growing horizontality.

The so-called 'Pyramidal' —better 'Gable' female headdress of the 16th century's first half.

The square coat of the middle of the century with Sabletons, the widest-toed shoes worn.

the four-centred arch, so depressed a span that beside it the classic round appears stilted. The great East Window of Bath Abbey actually sinks to a lintel. Before a single humanistic notion has touched it from the relaxing South, Gothic has submitted, and what began as a narrowed intensity of aspiration spreads until it is as horizontal as a Corn Exchange. There is no more inappropriate name for the whole final style of Gothic than Perpendicular.

The men who wrought this square style in due course began to show evidence of it in their clothes. The square cap is the first sign, for detached garments are always more easily and swiftly modified. An effect is tried on some outlier before it can be incorporated in the mass. In a generation the four-centred cap and shoe of Henry the Seventh have spread into the four-centred coat and broad style of Henry the Eighth. By then the Renaissance, in stone and wood, is beginning to make itself evident. The classical style, naturalised and sartorially rendered, will be seen at the court of Elizabeth. And with the New Style, which of course is not imperial but eclectic, comes the increasing specialisation and complexity which are the characteristics of the modern. Already by 1500 architecture had begun to show signs of the change which clothes, by being professionalised, had been undergoing, bifur-

cating into domestic and official building. In early Gothic a church is simply a large house, the thirteenth-century house (see "Pythagoras' Hall," Bishop Merton's house at Cambridge) indistinguishable from a church. By the time of the Tudors domestic and ecclesiastical architecture are clearly differentiated, and, as ever, Life goes with the unofficial, and men build fine houses, poor churches.

The Tudor House is, in these islands, the first example of a general native style of domestic architecture, relieved from the cramping necessities of a fortress. Naturally it shows a certain exuberance, which grows ever more "conceited" for close on two centuries, until with a self-conscious reaction men calling themselves Augustan made plain—in one great effort at levelling up into a cultured and ultimate commonsense—their verse, their prose, their silver, their furniture, their houses—indeed everything save their clothes and hair—they were too commonsensical to be aware of them.[1]

The extravagances of architecture are, step by step, translated in men's habit.

[1] Yet even in this is discernable a movement toward austerity; even so rational a society felt the influence of the too-late understood Renaissance, and Addison attacks the crude, vital scarlet of the country gentleman. See *The Spectator*.

Neither fitting nor falling, the main tendency of the modern fashions will be, we have seen, to compromise between the the gravitational and the anatomic, and so lay themselves open to many irrelevant outgrowths. With the affectation of a lighter build, when Henry bulked no longer, the broad-shouldered coat was for a moment thrown off altogether. The collared short cloak leaves the doublet exposed, but the trunks continue uninterrupted their descent to the knees. The hair grows shorter. But everything else is extravagant and the close crop can probably be explained by the distaste felt by a highly finished age for the lank locks and the bristling jowl of its predecessor. This was a period when men took regularly to making up their complexions, and with a sharpened perception (which drove that typical Elizabethan, Sir John Harrington, with his almost Minoan figure, to reinvent the Minoan's masterpiece, the water-closet), evidently attaining a keener sense of surfaces, they decided that if they could not shave clean, as they evidently could not, if one may judge by Holbein's careful painting, they had better trim, starch, and iron their beards and moustaches. When the cycle brings again round another such age of finish as it did in a century's time, the wig will solve part of the difficulty, giving at once, with its unstinted supply

of hair, everyone of which is composed into a perfect and polished curl, the mixture of exuberance and finish which nature so seldom bestows and which particular ages, generally of great vigour, so imperatively demand.

There is an outbreak of slashings and linings. The collar, meanest of "Little Pieces," as Holbein saw it, becomes in forty years a great petal with man's head as stamen. Anatomy is exaggerated with the ugly line of the peascod doublet. No amount of embroidery and slashing will make this beautiful, anymore than in The Three Wishes a jewelled case could make less hideous a nose to which a Black Pudding had been added. No doubt, in the uncritical, a sudden bold coup of fashion always gives pleasure (cf. to-day's fancy for plus fours) and in the fact that it accentuated their tight-laced waists men could not see that, so rigged, they had something of the hunch-back's figure. The peg-top was the mode, and the smartest figure was, for example, the boy James VI. of Scotland, where the style is obtained by making anatomy adapt to a design of three peg-tops arranged like the three Lombard balls inverted. But even more significant than this malformation on the waist-line is what is happening at the foot. With his shoes man throughout the Middle Ages

had concentrated on his toes naturally enough, and we have seen that in consequence he had done everything he could with them. He had curled them and looped them all the way up to his knees and back again. He had splayed them ever wider until they touched each other. Now the same problem had faced the fancied and resourceful Persian. He curled the toe and then, not over-pleased with the effect —anatomically it cannot be other than wholly wrong, giving as it must an effect of a lame and more than flat-footed malformation utterly repugnant to all creatures that stand, and fashion with all its fancies always comes back to heightened health—he had an inspiration, perhaps from his friend the horse. He left his toes to take care of themselves; and, turning to what had never been noticed before, took to his heels. The whole world was up and after him in a generation, and the notion soon ran through Venice to all Europe. The tip-toe sensation gave the last touch to the braced frame. The appearance gave at a glance the effect of complete poise. Man knew himself exalted by just those inches the lack of which so often makes him miss so much. As we saw when looking at the toe, the cycle of such an idea must be swift and definite. Within 50 years the addicts of high heels could when shod, no longer walk, but were carried,

their long delicately hoofed feet hanging over the litters' edge.

It was this rather upsetting heel that was appearing under the over-hanging peascod doublet. That extravagance soon got modified and the heel and the ruff, at the two extremes of the line, draw off attention.

The clumsy copy of the Renaissance, which in these islands is called Jacobean, had but one virtue, exuberance. It was a strange, turgid, romantic feeling trying to express itself classically; a feeling so crude that the elder mode, far from being rent by it, was never half filled. Architecture and furniture were lamentable. Its clothing, though loose and aimless, is better, for that is inspired by the Elizabethan style of building, which was sounder, and perhaps clothes can never fall as low as less-used appurtenances. Men's waists were released and their hair let down, though this time in ringlets, a fashion, as we have seen, which is the only possible way of wearing long hair gracefully, and which, owing to Nature's determination no longer to make our clothes for us, leads inevitably to wigs. Indeed, looseness, from the broad hats' sweeping feathers to the shoes' full bows, is the spirit of the style. It matches the mode of extravagances in literature and the frets, spindles, and strap-work of furniture and building.

In short, it is a romantic outburst : the second of the series.

The Puritan interposition is purely negative It cut off, and for the rest it was in costume (it had hardly time to affect the slower styles) the undress of a regular soldier. But that fact, the standing army, is of great importance to the history of fashion. By the rise of the regular, one more series of official dresses is set aside to draw off a little more of man's available energy for modifying his closest environment. In the main, the army being filled with simple lusty men, dons simple lusty colour. In consequence, much of the force which should have developed mufti went shut up in uniform.

The Restoration costume, did, however, take up the cavalier tradition much where it had been left, and, the full time of Jacobean building influence being come, touched an extreme of fussy shapelessness. The ribboned effect grew, everything was tagged and bowed, and men's breeches lapsed even a little further. But it cannot last. Severity must come back and even advance, for architecture has decided to become classic in spirit, and clothes must follow suit. The coat leapt onto men's backs again and shot down over the breeches. The hat becomes less abandoned and doffs its feather. Shoes, stockings, breeches, coat are all standardised

Charles declares his intention, a resolve which not even the most sumptuary of medieval kings had ever dared promulgate, to set fashion for good, another Cnut whose skirts the tide soon began to sweep awry. But for the time being exuberance is over, save in one thing, the periwig. Yet there it is really more baroque than romantic. The demand for ever more hair Nature had no intention of supplying home grown, so man took the step which he had not taken for forty generations, and made his crest, like his coat and tails, detachable. But even the power of appearing all Absaloms was exercised only for one generation. Then we enter the age of Anne and restraint. The Ramillies wig stems the cataract of curls, and the interest in hair turns from sheer quantity to tint. The assumption of powder is of no little interest. Men had powdered their skins from the Courts of the sixteenth century, but this blanching of the hair, this universal adoption of the crest of Gerontius, is a portent. It was the age of Reason that did it. There must have been inspiring it some notion that it was a clean break with the past. There could be no attempt to pretend that it was home-grown, any more than there is any pretence that the gloved hand is naturally covered with kid-skin. This deliberate adoption of a fashion with only

faint resemblance to the natural form whose place it takes, may be paralleled by the wooden beards of Egypt, to which reference was made earlier. There is certainly no necessity why rationalism should connote baldness any more than wisdom ugliness. The choice of white is, however, worth a moment's inquiry: for it is possible that it, too, is an architectural after-effect. It will be known to any who drop into old churches that it was only the generation prior which had taken to plain white plaster ceilings and no longer picked out their capitals and volutes, their mouldings and cornices, with colour and gilding. It was the first native generation, it must be remembered, which, wholly submitting to the antiquarian, made—thinking it was classic—its statuary chill lumps of naked marble. The scholarly John Evelyn had his father carved in white marble and of course uncoloured, but as the poor gentleman is still in full cavalier kit—the "classical draperies" which the eighteenth century albinism introduced, not yet being the fashion—he looks as if he had been disrespectfully white-washed. Such a bleaching may well have gone to the head and come through in the following generation.

Be that as it may, the eighteenth century now appears fully drawn up: there is the Church in black, the soldier

in scarlet, and the layman, still in spite of all these defections, carrying on. They are all wigged, yet the soldier and the cleric will give the layman no help even in the evolution of hair-dressing, but simply follow—after due protest—every change he establishes. The layman goes off down the century, reefing his wig, heightening his heels, polishing his shoes, and pulling in his waist and breeches. Sartorially it is a steadily tightening age. The severity of Anne is in architecture followed by a steady application of classical forms, full but never exuberant. And as the century ages the fulness draws in. Breeches become smalls. The full skirts of the coat are furled. The wig gathers at the neck, though when the hour of its disappearance comes it will, as armour did, as all fashions must, make, with the towering fantasies of the macaroni, a last excessive gesture. From the waist down, the great cycle which began with Tudor trunks more than 300 years before is almost complete. The puffing has shrunk upon the leg until anatomy again dictates—the whole length of the line—the cut. But above the belt the strange accumulated modern fashion will never be smoothed out. The coat, the waistcoat, the cravat and collar, will remain to this day, neither fitting nor hanging.

CHAPTER IX

THE INDUSTRIAL DEFLECTION

Even the great phase of the Adams-Empire cannot overcome this. The discovery of Pompeii and the publication of Palmyra and Spalato revealed to that generation a culture in some ways in precisely the same state as the *fin de siècle* which came upon it. Both were ages that had refined an original strength until it could only avoid flimsiness if it made a new material in which to express itself. The Romans had concrete, in which their concealed architects were always experimenting. It was the tragedy of the Adams-Empire movement that it was born a generation too soon. It ought to have exploited and inspired the Industrial Revolution. Unfortunately, it began from without and worked inward, no doubt a fault which sprang from the antiquarian spirit which thought too much in terms of the picturesque and too little of solids and mass and the sense of thrust. So it thought in appearances, and too often translated unsoundly into structure. The Roman architect worked from within and

died suffocated by Greek varnish before he could reach the surface. This creator lies immured in his work like the coral animacula in their sea-breaking reefs. Therefore he never affected dress. He never could set a fashion, but died an engineer, and the man about town, utterly ignorant of the great force from which only a veneer insulated him, could only show his taste by giving up an hour to "gravitational" beauty, in spending it having his toga folded onto him. The Adams starting, and unfortunately staying on the surface, made an immediate impression on tailoring, an impression as distinct as and even swifter than that made by the architecture of the thirteenth century. Essentially they were not engineers, but short of that root of architecture they were amazingly fertile. They —and they are the last; with them the cycle turns again—carried on as an entirety the evolution of that environment which man makes for himself. They at least were free of that paralysis, common to-day, caused by looking back on our own tradition of home-made antiquarianism. They started with a style which expressed the most refined culture known to them, a culture which seemed to the supreme historian of their age the best of all worth living in. They took the latest domestic inventions, the new grates that steel-work

'Empire' lines resultant after some years in woman's dress.

Similar effect, but not so complete, in contemporary male dress.

Proportion of an 'Adams' panel. Elongation and delicacy of horizontal detail. Window, door and wall proportion are all on this scale.

made possible, the light furniture which only a perfect joinery could fashion, and, instead of attempting to disguise them as some thing different, instead of "adapting" them to look medieval or Jacobean, gave them a shape which was deliberately and beautifully expressive. Living in such an "up-to-date" environment, man's costume, similarly sensitive as are the coats of other animals who adopt "protective colouration," imitated the new "grace of economy." The frills disappeared, wigs and bows and flounces shrivelled. Tights openly came back again, and the coats' skirts were cut back, until from the waist they hung a mere vestige from behind. Another stroke and that would have been severed. Men tried the effect on boys and lackeys. The Eton jacket and even to a greater degree the livery known as "buttons," were almost as frankly anatomical as the fourteenth century. But courage failed, and the line of retreat was never abandoned. Livery, school costume, uniforms of rank, servility or bondage side-tracked steady development along the main line of advance, and so dress, like all great rivers of evolution dividing into a hundred sluggish channels, loses its direction and finally comes to an end. Once a style is professionalised, it is set. No individual may modify it, and indeed with this multitude of special

dresses no one is long enough in any one of them to affect it.

In truth, the last great concerted effort of architecture and costume, or perhaps one ought to say the last time the common energy is sufficiently concentrated to make itself visible along the whole line of man's environment, it is full of the signs that this is an end. The lack of root, of engineering, in the larger, has already been noted. It was due without a doubt to the new, objective, spectacular way of approaching architecture. The Adams style is the last of an evolution and the first of the revivals. For Ruskin, this is the case against the Great Renaissance, but that movement was too creative and fundamental so to be dismissed: the proof that this is so lies in the fact that the Renaissance was able to reproduce as well as copy, and so gave rise to an entire evolution of its own. The Adams, who fittingly gave their name to surface-work, could not found a style. Their manner never evolved into a series of descendent styles. Structurally, the Adams style, which should be condensed in steel, is a sham. Its austerity goes no deeper than that of the first Empire, which made it the Imperial Mode. There is no discovery in either, though both offer a remarkable pretence of making all things new. The Adams fell back on stucco for effects which

if they meant anything, should have been chased in metal. The Empire swept away an effete tradition and could only plan to inaugurate another. Had Napoleon been capable of an idea save precedental self-aggrandisement, the Kings would never have come back. Had the Adams been architects instead of decorators, there need never have been a Gothic Revival. But evolution always wears a look of inevitability, and certainly, if we are ever free, it is long before the moment of action. We may save our children's children : our grandfathers settled our fate. The lath and plaster of the latest Classic had no organic inevitability about it. The house, as a reality of walls and roof, was still a hole and corner matter of old brick bonding and king post and queen post. The fashionable style of the moment was no more than a screen, so when people tired of its appearance it could not grow naturally into something else. It was simply taken down and another spread in its place. The knowledge was fatal. The Romantics, always hating Reality, saw their chance. Gothic should be put back, Kings come again, and hair should burgeon and be blown in curls all round the face as though a wind from behind were fanning it, and all should be as it was in the good old times. The Adams architectural movement was still sufficiently real, still

vital enough to translate itself in costume. The Romantic movement ruffled a little men's hair, but passed and left them to pomade. The Gothic revival created a number of ingenious castles, wherein invention exercised itself in concealing the necessary complexities which have come into life since the Middle Ages, so that mirrors are disguised as shrines and bathrooms as oratories. But not by a button did it affect the cultured gentleman's attire. This is a revolutionary fact that has escaped the notice it deserved. For the first time in the world a man will live among what he calls architecture and it will have no effect on his clothes. This can mean only that building has lost the last characteristic of a great conventional art. It can no longer be a style absolute, to deviate outside which is to mark oneself a barbarian. The eighteenth century was one with the thirteenth in opposition to this grotesque licence of the nineteenth. In another generation, in stone pure eclecticism will have arrived. Like a swaying top, taste will run with ever quicker reduplication, through Greek, Roman, Medieval, Jacobean, Anne, Georgian. The sequence will become confused, styles will coalesce. Already men are no longer aware of anything absurd, though they live in a house with half-a-dozen styles protruding from it. So

architecture ends—for the present. Its renaissance is, however, ready to break out the moment the sham façade falls.

For though the affected styles of architecture, because they cannot alter his dress's development, show that they are shams, the real projected evolution, though disregarded, has not ceased. The true energy of building is, as ever, following its own evolution and drawing costume after it. Throughout the long association of clothes and architecture there is perhaps no more striking example of the influence of the outer art upon the inner. All men of taste believed that Industrialism had nothing to do with art; most of the artistic were beginning to declare that it could reside only in the "reality of Gothic," yet art failed to give the vital reaction—by influencing the style of clothes—and Industrialism did. Surrounded with building, the entire utilitarian purpose of which confined it to archaic simplicities, dress, too, became austere. The one advance that such architecture was permitted was in the direction of size. Immense vaults, tunnels to take trains, gas reservoirs which could eclipse the Pantheon, for giant furnaces huge shafts which could swallow the greatest column Rome ever raised or the loftiest obelisk of Egypt: such were Industrialism's invariable themes. In consequence,

the cylinder was everywhere printing itself on the subconscious, and cylindrical man becomes top-hatted, frock-coated, trousered. As these great works are in action, behold everywhere smoke, soot, and cinder, and, in answer, the dress of man melanised.

Horace Walpole and Ruskin were both Gothicists, both attempted revivals of the style. Walpole was a dilettante, and perhaps, therefore, one ought not to expect a Gothic wardrobe at Strawberry Hill; that, even for an eighteenth-century Lord, would have been pushing eccentricity too far. But with all his aggressive solemnity, was Ruskin at bottom more sincere? Mr. Gladstone, before the Industrial environment had fully affected costume, could introduce a Budget in a blue coat—an outrage on petrified good taste even a Labour Chancellor will never dare—but when the impression of the real architecture of the day had sunk in, Ruskin, the medievalist is as black and tubular as a Scotch minister or a factory chimney.

The age of stone is over, and the age of ferro-concrete is not yet. We fear its austerity. We fear its immense power. Our little wants and conceptions are dwarfed in its immense capacity: a genie offering to build us palaces and we can think only in hovels. With our starved tradition and our cramped invention, we

cannot ask this new force to do anything worthy of itself. We cannot tax it to the utmost, and so we cannot get its beauty from it. So we cover it up, as Hellenistic taste walled up its parent a thousand years ago and stifled discovery.

We may therefore take heart that this Samson is finding little difficulty with his withies and our styles are in fragments. Exposed, it will shape its own design, and faced by that we shall develop an appropriate costume. Soon along the lines of its structure will appear decoration, and beauty will mark the spot not where there has been strength but where there shall be more. Even before that summer, the great archaic surfaces will smooth away the fussiness of our dress as the Olympian Zeus, says Pausanias, smoothed away all the anxieties and interests with which the casual sight-seer had strayed into its presence.

Meanwhile our clothes, ordinary civvies, are still with us; and. as all the conventional arts save this one have vanished, it remains with the unique anthropological interest which belonged to the Tasmanian. The Revolution of the Modern Age has crept continually closer. It has destroyed man's house. Its hand is already on his raiment. For a moment longer that remains. Let us look once more as we stand at the turn, down the long defile.

The last thread remains in our hand strained to parting. It is our one unbroken tie with the past. To-morrow it will be one with Solomon and Dives.

Before the beginning of years when men went by moons there was an art of life entire; the whole of living was one convention. The Australian still so lives, keeps all his elaborate customs, and has as his reward no benefit save the wholly satisfying sense that he is right. In this essay has been traced a long period during which all that men put up and on was in a single style. The outer part then died, clinging[1] on without modification for a stage just as long as any couple of the phases of growth that preceded it, and then, as in convulsions, it passes through a series of increasingly rapid recapitulations, loses all power to influence the inner part, which slowly begins to ossify itself, and is finally analysed into eclecticism. Of the last ring of cicumambient life one living remnant survives, dying but not yet dead. Of the entire convention, the complete art of life, there now remains only this innermost sheath, men's fashions. Dean Inge once said, "We talk of my

[1] The 'Perpendicular' phase of Gothic in the countries where it was native lasted roughly from the middle of the fourteenth to the middle of the sixteenth century. The two earlier phases each lasted about a century.

art, my religion, and my philosophy. We only don't talk of my science, and that is perhaps why science alone advances." He utterly overlooked the fact that no well-bred man could talk of 'my fashion.' Under his eye there was a real convention and all he can suggest, with true Platonic contempt for the irrationality of the mass, is that men should adopt a uniform, "for," he adds "they cannot be enamoured of the ugly, costly, inconvenient garments which fashion compels them to wear"[1]; as if when convention speaks private taste may even whisper. But the mere fact that there can be this criticism shows that the style and its suggestion will soon vanish. To-day a man will live in a "mixed" house and worship in a "mixed" church and never feel a twinge of incongruity, but nothing would induce him to go from house to church in a top-hat and toga. But the style he carries is petrified and will soon flake.[2] Now, like all moribund morality, it is nothing but a bundle of vetos. Yet in its last moments —when it can still make a civilised and intellectual man feel correct and happy in his correctitude, because, though his mind

[1] *Outspoken Essays*, Second Series.

[2] Practically speaking the Dean was right in disregarding the claim of clothing to be now a creative convention. If the style was alive it would grow.

knows he is clad irrationally, his taste perceives that he looks ugly and his individual consciousness rebels against petty and detailed dictation, he feels that he is obeying his tradition—let us realise that we are in the presence of the sole authentic relic of things the most venerable. At such a moment and not in the sepulchres of Pharaohs or crowded temples may we feel the unique thrill of touching a past which has left no other record, of being *en rapport* not with the cerements but with the soul that escaped them, of understanding the condition when " This do " sufficed, " and thou shalt live " had as yet no need to be added.

CHAPTER X

THE CEREMENTING OF THE GENTLEMAN

The characteristic of this ultimate style is naturally finish. Man's power of taking notice seems steadily to have increased. Of course it must vary among different races, but on the whole (cf. Myers, *Psychology*, where natives' power of picking a trail is said to be if anything below that of a civilised man trained to look for the indications), it seems to develop *pari passu* with civilisation. The Chinese have wrought up their sense for the surface of glazes to an unsurpassed delicacy. In the line of our own descent the Roman seems the first generally to appreciate textures for their own sake,[1] though perhaps the cultured Egyptians acquired such a taste. Certainly they had time to do so[2]. The Greeks in this, as in much other detail, coarser than their masters, or perhaps one should say their fellow-slaves, liked paint, and with what an obliterating thickness they laid it on the plaster-surfaced marble shafts of their best work suggests. The Romans, with their love for fine-grained

[1] Seneca was mocked, for though calling himself a stoic, he had many hundred tables inlaid with lemon wood.

[2] The sham lapis they make of gold-flaked glass suggests this.

and highly polished woods, their use of glass, crystalline mosaics and "split-marble" sheets, show a capacity for seeing into material which perhaps can be developed only amid long-civilised peoples. We know they used the tweezer where the razor failed. Up to our own sixteenth century it has been noted, however, a man seems to have been considered clean shaven so long as the outline of his chin was visible. Earlier, a priest's brass has nearly always the chin well stippled, as though it were a seemly thing to be bristling. Then notice begins to be taken, and soon powder is in demand. But still Queen Elizabeth's dresses have not a little of the rich squalor of savagery about them when the Irish Viceroy has to report that he cannot dispose of casts-offs, as was purposed as presents to a chieftainess, because they "are so slobbered." The second part of the seventeenth century is the period of Refinement's birth. The Long Parliament abolishes torture and the sudden shrinking from a nauseous spectacle is rationalised as a step to abandon an ineffective way of obtaining truth. Washing comes back and Pepys, who could stand his cellar being a cesspool—till he discovered that the sewage was another household's—is put off his food by his Aunt Fenner's dirty hands when she dishes a dinner. Stained velvets will no

longer be treasured by people who ceasing to eat with their fingers, no longer wipe them on the table-cloth. By the end of the eighteenth century the *School for Scandal* shows that society had begun to notice teeth as well. By the nineteenth, the bath, the tooth-brush, and the nail-scissors are everywhere taken for granted, so that politeness winces from the detailed pride with which the gallant of the end of the sixteenth has himself painted toying with a pocket combination of tooth-pick and ear-scoop, while that Byzantine princess, who, coming as Dogaressa to early Venice, brought her little gold fork, and, on dying, probably of the insanitation of the mud-banks, was chronicled as destroyed by God for her indecent pride, becomes one of the martyr-patronesses of refinement. The hollow-ground razor gives an ever smoother shave, though the exacting eye keeps pace[1] until it would seem for the swarthy that, unless electrolysis can do something for them, the canonical seven times a day will hardly surpass their razings. The surface involved also spreads. The heavy moustache of the last generation has not survived, though a nostril

[1] This is another example of the alternating poles of evolution whereby progress is obtained by competition of defence and attack, supply and demand: e.g. armour plate and artillery, and spindle and loom.

patch may be worn. The Boston cut sweeps the clean shave round the neck almost to the ears, and above, so sleeked as to make smooth the passage from the nature of hair to the artificiality of a silk skull cap,[1] the crest of man is again changing into a wig. As with the extended cut, so throughout in this intensified sense of surface America leads the way. It may be due to the influence on a highly suggestible people of the only living architecture in the world, the smooth, steel-evident, columnar invention of the sky-scraper.[2] In any case American teeth are advanced beyond the state of English, as these are above the Irish. American nails are being brought up to the same unprecedented standard. Polished teeth, varnished nails, depilation, and finally wigs will all be defended against conservatism's cry of decadence by the counter-claim, hygiene. True enough no doubt, but nevertheless as much a rationalisation

[1] Women have had some success with silk wigs. Certainly the silk-worm spins a thread the glossiness of which we can imitate only on ours with oil, and antimacassars are out of fashion.

[2] I seem to notice where American fashions can escape the British authority, in the middle west tailors' advertisements a tendency to the perpendicular, especially in the wide revival for boys of the long " Norfolk " with parallel bands running from shoulder to thigh.

as was the defence of the abolition of torture in the interests of truth. The twentieth century fears to be called effeminate—so did the seventeenth. To-day men powder after shaving their faces, to-morrow, after shaving their heads as well, they may be powdering their wigs. Already American skin is the smoothest and least hairy in the world, outside China. The intensification of focus, which accounts for all the above, is naturally hardest on the face, and what in the end manipulative surgery may not do with the tired elastic, which after a few years of expression gives out in so depressing a manner, none can say. Suffice it that there is no change that woman and man will not undergo provided it is convincing. That is the whole issue, and this fact, this curious manner in which we look at each other's faces, when considered, brings a curious problem to light. Though the face is studied more narrowly than anything else in nature, so that a change sometimes of less than of an hundredth of an inch allows us to recognise one person from another, we really see it still with an wholly unanalytic observation. We search there for meanings and motives, for evidence of age, expenditure and tempera ment, but actually not for appearance We can tell exactly the impression that a face has given, but how it gave it, what

details composed the sum, and how it was added, we cannot reckon. If, therefore, a make-up is successful we feel how well the maker looks. If it fails, we experience a little of the disgust of decay. A wig begins to fall, false teeth slip, and we wince, for racially (which is actually as we are at the moment experiencing) we do not expect healthy, if unrelieved, baldness, clear hard gums, but something all the worse for being undefined. It is the supreme horror of life, corruption. We feel that we were in some way nearly trapped by a mask, and we start back, cruel fear vestigial in our contempt. This clear but quite conventional glance is largely akin to the animal's. We see features vividly enough, provided they fit into certain assumptions, as though we could set type provided that it made up comprehensible words but were unable to find it, should it not. The face is the focus of attention, and perhaps now the centre of attraction, since it is the greatest part of the body uncovered by civilised man. We therefore see it with an immediate, a prepossessing emotion. It makes or mars whatever may come after, and no mutilation is so terrific as serious facial damage. It is irrational that we should be so moved, but we may recall for our comfort that the great Greeks could hardly conceive of a man being good

who was even ugly (cf. Plato on Socrates as the one exception). We may, however, hope to modify the conventional mask into which, with subconscious violence, we would force all features. There may in the end be something approaching facial fashions, and even cross-eyes may for a season have a look in. It is even less excusable when some of that vague, homogeneous judgment passes into our estimate of clothes. Women will often say that a man was well dressed when they could not recall anything he had on. It was right—that was all they knew. But such a standard, once the convention has ceased to move of itself and become dependent for its progress on individual enterprise, is sterilising. It only knows that personal departure is wrong. It waits for a class-movement that will never again come.

Some such unreflective judgment once ruled architecture too. The mass was aware only that a building they had made for them was seemly. Whether before the Renaissance the builders themselves understood the exact contribution of the parts to the whole, could analyse and hold apart, resolve and compose, may be doubted. Perhaps analysis is the end of Art, as the world has so far understood it. No doubt you can take apart once and again, and the pieces like dislocations will slip back,

only a little strained. But once too often the organism may be deranged, something alien may slip in, the whole may fall irretrievably to pieces. We may lose the power of seeing the thing as a whole, lose our conductivity that allows that immediate shock of pleasure or disgust, whereby we " stand moved."

Will the complexion and the hair, then, follow where clothes are going and architecture has gone ? Shall we attain a perfect make-up and then change it at will ? At present, teeth are so sound as shams, and the position they occupy so defensible that they seem inclined to stabilise the taste for a mouth full of white lumps, and, though the United States is trying to popularise a chryselephantine parti-colour, English good taste, as ever, is set against anything, even in the mouth, that is loud. Hair, however, is having a hard time, and perhaps, as in Egypt, people will come to prefer the smooth smear of a cosmetic eye-brow, gold for tea, purple for dinner, than the bristling home-grown ridge.

Such a development would be haled as decadence, but in its definite departure, its conscious artificiality, it would be evidence of a new vigour. Once free of natural limitations, of physical tradition, free of the antiquarian's white and the industrialist's black, the colour and shap-

ing of man may show him, so long the favourite of Life's children, at last the most splendid. But such a future needs for its attainment a Revolution. Out of the ever deeper, smoother groove in which we wear away, there is no chance of slipping into freedom. Psychologically, architecture will have to gather itself up, fall upon us, and crush the sarcophagus of glazed propriety in which we are ceremented. No easy evolution can loose us. The finish of modern tailoring has never been surpassed. Beside it, the dresses of the eighteenth centuries show so ill put together that, for this reason alone, no one to-day would wear them. Such fatal pride is taken in surface that in the end the elimination of every rudiment from which fresh decoration could spring, leaves the whole design sterile. It was to cover ill-fitted groins of our thirteenth century vaults that was evolved the rib which after became a thing of beauty in itself. The markings on the glove back, the braided trouser, have in identically the same way made an opportunity for decoration out of an awkward necessity. But it is from vestigial remnants, not from rudimentary organs, that has grown all the decoration of modern dress. In consequence, the root growing ever more atrophied, the flower must wither away. We reach then, naturally, the stage when

all change is considered vulgar, at least by the well-bred, and for that reason they and not those who introduce variety must have the better right to be called decadent. The bowler hat has lasted a hundred years —an outrage unparalleled—and is yet and will be till the Deluge " a prime favourite with gentlemen." The top hat has been offered a safe and honourable retirement as a Presidential Mitre, but why should it leave a world which will not discard it ? With the frock coat it has lasted its century and changed so little that one must suppose that it like Tithonus has found some dreadful gift of eternal life. Their shapes are the same, but their complexions, like his, have suffered. We have seen how industrialism influenced the Victorians in spite of their protests, rendering them cylindrical and black, and as the ferro-concrete age delays breaking its shell, screened from its influence man can only carry on. Smoke abatement and the use of by-products may make him less sooty, more polished. But the fitting in of everything only aggravates the fatal technical triumph of tailoring. There is no greater barrier to creative expression than a faultless technique. The next step is death, that ever follows hard on a finish so perfect that everything is disposed of, even that little irregularity which is the last opportunity of life : death folded, glazed, and sealed.

CHAPTER XI

THE CULMINATION OF UNIFORMS

But even at this last hour we cannot help noticing Life's last counter, though it is vain. Many organisms when they are in desperate peril seem to abandon hope of themselves and act only for Life ; they disperse their last remnant of vitality in throwing out off-shoots, each generally too weak to strike out a new stock from itself. So has the organism of clothing acted. At the time when itself was weakest it has, as never before, thrown out a thicket of sub-uniforms and semi-dresses. Hunting was always a semi-religious exercise of the Aryan, and so of necessity evolved its vestments ; but, though the Norman " loved the red deer as though he were their father " and hunted them in a sensible costume, it was not till there was nothing left larger than a fox to chase over England that the red-coat became a livery. We can fix the end of a certain freedom, the rise of a rite, when we see the type of dress that remains, just as we should know if we lost all record of the Reformation that the miracle play Punch

Pilate must have come to an end as a living mime about the end of the sixteenth century from the villian's ruff and peascod doublet. But these things, which formerly took place about one a century, now come thick and fast. The day when cricket could be played by flinging off a frock-coat and jamming on a top-hat, has been joined by that in which an afternoon on the links was an opportunity for wearing one's oldest clothes. There is hardly a sport now which has not attained investiture rank: it is not sadly but ceremonially we take our pleasures, and perhaps when the 1960's are dining in our room in dressing gowns, over the green covered tables at Thurston's, some "mis-spent youth" of to-day will be reaping his harvest of expert applause in spite of the balk of creaking starch.

Of course early in the phase dining acquired its mess-kit, retaining the exhibitionist coat which retired to night-life when the Victorian skirts on man and woman, beds, tables and chairs came down with a run. But here the division is itself divided, perhaps because dining is not quite artificial enough. A jacket intrudes, via the smoke-room, and reinforced by keeping up relationships with its brother the lounge jacket, which in the real world of day was driving skirts into the sanctuary of officialdom, has itself

made the dress- as rare as the morning-coat. "War," said Lecky, "always creates new fashions." But the late shock was for the sartorial, as it certainly was for the professionally artistic spirit, overdone. Paralysis seems to have resulted, instead of stimulant. During the process of being battered, it did at least seem that all the shoots would be cut back and in consequence the single main stem would have a chance to go on. But the one wish of survivors seems to be to reconstruct, even to its sterile multiplicity, 1914. So the top-hat and the morning- and the evening-coat are all here again. The very people who should lead have, like the Bourbons a century ago, after a compulsory sojourn in discomfort abroad, learnt nothing and forgotten nothing and so can only revive in detail the order they inherited. The detailed evolution of evening-dress in their time will illustrate this. Through the first years of the century it had slowly evolved a *juste-à-corps* effect. Slenderness was produced by lengthening every vertical point, and to parallel the long points of the waistcoat the original horizontal lines of the coat's breasts shrank and down-curved until it was impossible to make them meet. Then the dinner-jacket began to draw away attention and on its own to evolve the same effect, but in a less "exposed" way, the white torso with a

seam of black was exchanged for an approximation to a black jupon. Now taste seems wandering back like the folk-sheep to tails. The long points are cut off the waistcoat, which had, like most such decoration, through excess defeated its end and become apronly, and, with that garment's mode of to-day, an uncompromisingly doubly horizontal cut—which demands, where the kinder fashion it succeeds suggested, a waist—a trick perhaps to discover those who are still trying (most desperate of competitions) to pass as young—the coat-points are left in the air and the whole evolution stultified. So every dying style must recapitulate and shift uneasily to and fro, afraid to commit itself by a definite break-away. Just when it reaches a fence it sidles off nervously, until it comes up against another check, when it drifts back again. It cannot make a leap, and all its petty modifications will never amount to anything. We know now definitely from genetics that only sports can make a real change. And the lounge suit, the suit in which most of contemporary living is done, moves as little and as timorously. The jacket shortens, then the waistcoat doubles. The jacket doubles and lengthens again; the trousers swell a trifle and resume. The collar softened, coloured; it ought to have come out over the coat, but that

would have been too definite, would have involved too much responsibility. It set hard again, and now has blanched into its original lifelessness. There is no beat any longer, only a dying waver. Still *rigor mortis* has not set in. There is life still at the extremes. The current is reversed, and such invention as there is comes from below and is adopted years after by such as are considered leaders of fashion. I believe it can be shown that all changes in men's dress during the last twenty years have come up from Whitechapel. The waisted lounge jacket, the four buttons on the sleeve, the parti-coloured boot, the coloured collar might all be observed as horrible Cockney taste before the War; they have all since been introduced into the West End. But we cannot trust such inverted leadership. At any moment some University extension may teach these poor lads good taste, and our last reserve of invention will be invaded and sterilised. After all, they are only Diehards refusing to yield their ancient privileges and liberties though the *raison d'être*, sanction and inspiration of such, have with architure's close departed.

What then? Well, unless we take to concrete—and if our trade goes from us we shall not need its resources, stucco will do us nicely—we shall remain, as the most penetrating social thinker of our day

suspects, an Academy, a Museum, a second Athens of good taste, to which the Sino-American masters of the world will come to view a little society which never changes its neat elegance, beautifully preserved because quite useless, and handsomely pensioned for keeping out of the running. It can be foreseen in its top-hats and generally perfect grooming, carefully bred to sterility, promenading for the pleasure of its keepers a completely restored Regent Street. Above it, no aeroplane may fly ; throughout it, a 20 m.p.h. speed limit will be rigorously enforced ; most important of all in no shop of it may be found either any new design or any device for effecting the old, for this is the abomination of desolation, the " made up."

Outside that reserve there must of course lie the circumambient wilderness of eclecticism, throughout which clothes will continue to unfold. It may be asked will these peoples remain eclectic ? We have seen already that in America building awakes, and in spite of the scholarship of their architects breaks their canons, as Gulliver the bonds of Lilliput ; and already Americans appear to have got rid of semi-dresses and half-uniforms, and the men are becoming as single-suited as the Chinese. Fashion then may be concentrating for an advance under the pull of the sky-scrapers.

At that stage of analysis, with full self-

conscious rationality, will all interest in such a thing as costume disappear? Will the Force, every shred of cloth and coat of paint worked through, run out smooth, uninterrupted, unaffecting,onto some more external, more focussed, more deliberately selected circumference of environment, even as from evolving the body it spread to clothes? Certainly it will, if there is nothing to stop it; but as long as we have bodies at all we shall to some extent intercept the emanation, and a coat will be precipitated on us. In the remaining pages it is suggested that this obstruction, our physical body, will steadily decrease, but, as we are part of life until we can bring another cortex as fully under its influence, until we make an environment as intimately its vehicle as our bodies have been, however they lessen, bobbins on which the thread of life is spun they will remain. But will man trouble to go through the elaborate processes when he knows they are ceremonial circuits to bring him mazed to a goal which now he sees from the start and purposes to reach? Is the Procession the real Triumph and for self-conscious individuals the culminating moment at the veiled altar as empty as the initiation of most mysteries? Can we take the wage in advance and let the labour go? Surely such questions are evidence of intellectualisation. The nearer

we get to understanding life's full intention, the further we depart from the narrowness of commonsense. Consciousness has at least not less to learn from the subconscious than it has to teach it.

CHAPTER XII

THE FUTURE'S FASHIONS

We cannot, however, take leave of our philosophy when it has only dipped over the horizon of a few hundred years. Tracing its ancestry, we have gone back millenia. Our age has a secular outlook. Let us with a last glance see as far as we can.

It will not be denied that our architecture is in flux. We must take it, then, as proved that our clothing will soon begin to flutter—indeed that it will be twisted out of all recognition. Beyond that it is difficult to foresee; two main lines are, however, probable. A fresh tide welling from the centre may flush the whole course of life with revived appetite, new habit, original architecture. On the other hand, "projection" may get clear of costume's skirts, and, abandoning them, may pour unrestrained onto the outer environment. Against such a course it is true we have the precedent of sartorial reaction, how architecture has created the styles of tailoring, so that the projection has to come back like a boomerang. But this, as has been suggested, may only

belong to the elaborate process necessary to a primitive mind. Unable to gain expression directly, it attains it by putting the subject out and taking it back again, as the lemur, unable to pass an object from one hand directly to the other, places it on the ground and then picks it up. On the other side, a stronger argument can be drawn from the history of vestigial remnants. They are nearly all doing some other work than that which they performed at their first appearance; they are not by any means mere hangers on. The descent into desuetude is, we are finding, amazingly devious. It has also to be kept in mind that much that is genetically a means becomes in the single light of consciousness quite legitimately an end. Man may by a series of arcs, like a skater, advance, irrupting the closed circle of natural sequence and entering upon a larger, if less immediately satisfying, process. The end is not defeated, but enriched. It is doubtful whether delight in the means has ever caused the miscarriage of a larger purpose. Often has man imagined it so, but as a fragment of nature it is more probable that his imagination rather than its invention is at fault. What we witness at such moments seems rather its branching than its truncation, an early air beginning to be wrought into an orchestral harmony.

The two lines seem therefore equally possible; indeed, both may be followed by different societies. In the one we shall have a constant reciprocation, a lighter, stronger architecture imposing cleaner, closer, more convenient clothing. Colour will come back onto building surfaces, and men's dress will begin to flush in reflection.

On the other, if there is complete projection, architecture may take the place of clothing, and some outer art, more austere, less intimate, may take the place of architecture.[1] That art has for millenia been the communal garment, the city's habit. In spite of its grandeur, it is always at its truest domestic; the most astounding temple is at base the House of God.

[1] In the main these two courses, though they may be experimented with concurrently, may be expected to be in sequence. Clothing, architecture, engineering is a regular expansion, and as the world grows unified there is no room for two styles to exist together. The nonsense talked about national styles and arts, a nonsense which is almost wholly political propaganda, for even in the Middle Ages the arts spread across the frontiers, causes peoples to imagine that they can think differently from their fellows. The dialect may be strange, but the thought is always the same. So the higher a culture becomes, the easier it is to interchange it. Place it beside a lower, and their kinship is established by the speed with which the higher draws the less advanced through the stages it has traversed itself to its own level.

Beside it, our engineering is as remote as it seems from our wardrobes. Is not then this austere, archaic, mighty, art which has begun to stretch its great arms over branches of the sea and set its feet on ocean floor, the thing which will make the experiments in form, while architecture will follow reflecting in intimate stone and tile, brick and beam the styles it sets ?[1]

Will not architecture become all that clothing has been ? The main fabric will be given by a skeletal structure sustaining a circulatory system that already begins to imitate the elaboration of the body's. Formerly an architect had only to design rooms ; the only channels for which he had to provide were stairs and chimneys, and these were often to his sparse invention obstacles, not opportunities ; they were wholly beyond the Greek. Now he has to clothe series of pipes and communications, valves and orifices, until his task is utterly beyond any but genius. The only hope, therefore, for lesser men in the profession is to recognise that henceforward their work must approximate more to the tailor's and less to the builder's.

[1] The growth of ceramics in building, the use of concrete, and the love of finish may all combine to make our houses things which we shall cast from a mould, and so increasingly models of themes set by vaster problems of construction wherein material can be taxed to the utmost and design created.

They must hang and fit and stitch onto the body the engineer gives. Moreover, they must, if they are to make good fashions, take their themes not from the past but from the present, not from archaeology but from engineering. The reflection of its immense and lean tensility will be seen in a spare style of fabric and decoration. The inhuman possibilities of metal are not needed in domestic structure. The roof-tree still adequately covers the head, which in potentiality has reached the stars. The human voice, which has at last indeed "gone out into all lands," unamplified, fails in Bramante's encompassment of stone. We have enough for our actual, individual need in the old material; only in our terrific, united force do we prove it inadequate. Already for two generations we have needed steel to stable our iron horses, and ours should see sky-scraping columbaria for our metal carrier-pigeons' mewing-posts—to which the Spire of Salisbury "were but a wand"—whereon the mechanic hawks of war may swoop and be hooded, and stalls which would over-reach a city and in which the airship whales of the upper atmosphere, beside whom those of the sea are shrimps, may glide and be tethered.[1]

[1] The most gigantic building man has yet reared and with a certain strange echo of Chosru's great arch at Ctesiphon, is the dirigible hangar at Orly just completed for the French Army.

If then architecture takes the place of clothing, what of clothes themselves? On this hypothesis they must ultimately disappear. The radiation of life will have become so strong that the veil nearest to it will be consumed. On the analogy of physical evolution they may of course hang on, reduced completely to some other purpose, but ever growing slighter. Such a deduction may, however, be unsound. Clothing is not living tissue: it is at once less intimate and more under control. It is worn for modesty, for protection and, for display. Two-thirds of its strength might therefore remain untouched. It might—but it seems more probable that with the unconfessed purpose of display brought like a complex to the surface of consciousness and resolved, with the force that inspired it drawn off to engineering and architecture,[1] modesty too would be affected. Physical display and the concealment which is modesty are only two sides of one process; eliminate the one, can the other remain? As to protection, we no doubt have overrated this necessity. The vasor-motor system seems immensely adaptable. We wear far less than the medieval gentleman generally had on,

[1] It is worth remarking that as science arose art declined, as invention was aroused design sank. The last supreme architects were the first inspired engineers.

buttoned to the ears and the palms, but we do not need half our wardrobe. Much indeed may be positively harmful, preventing the pigmentation of the skin, which seems the best protection that man can present to the elements. Any covered portion becomes bleached, relaxed, and tender. Hygiene, if it could have things all its own way, would no doubt strip us naked.[1]

The three purposes of clothes seem outworn, and our last garment in danger of falling to the ground. Perhaps the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge has this at least in common with other vegetable poisons: continuously taken, it becomes its own antidote. The first effect was, it is said, to create a condition of "hyper-autognosis." As knowledge has increased, clothing may ebb, until, the cycle complete, we return to our original exposure, incapable any longer of being put out of countenance. Such a progress is, however, dependent of course on a prior advance in domestic architecture. For people unshod the floors must be smooth, soft, unchilling, perhaps of some substance like rubber, in which resistance-coils keep a gentle and constant warmth. Indeed, all around, the standard of comfort of present clothing

[1] See Dr. Rollier's book *Heliotheraphy*, which describes his work at Leysin in Switzerland, where children and adults go naked in the frost and sunshine.

must be projected onto the house. That we are facing that way, however absurdly distant the goal may seem, can be shown by looking back. For centuries men and women delicately shod had to carry their wood paving with them and go tottering in pattens over the quaggy roads. Now, with what would have seemed to them a fabulous effort, we have spread it over square miles. So, too, with the wayfarer's lantern ; and soon the umbrella, in glass-covered streets, will seem as archaic. Within the house central heating keeps a dry and equable temperature already.

Probably there will be a Minoan transition. Certainly men will not step straight out of the dress of to-day, and, pointing to a house as metallic as Alcinoous', say with the projected pride of mother Graccus, "This is my wardrobe." Physical evolution, too, may not be instantly amenable. It is possible that the instep is as unfinished a piece of engineering as the musculature of the abdominal wall. Nature, that is the subconscious evolutionary side, may have abandoned both and left us for psychological reasons to add the necessary bracing. Certainly if the wall, as anatomists seem to agree, because of our sudden shifting onto an upright position, is insufficiently buttressed, it does not appear unnatural to suppose that the arch

needs, with this even greater increase of strain, underpinning. Boots and Belts, which we have seen have also other strong associations, may then remain for a long time, perhaps as long as we are recognisable as men, upholding, bracing, displaying ever more slender figures. For the Rococo female and the archaic male will probably both disappear, she braced, he smoothed, both refined into an exquisite intergrade.

Naturally such a vision of an inverted Eden seems extravagant, but it is indicated by architecture. Without a doubt it is a possibility. Let us, then, in taking leave of the far future, while still at the cross-roads turn again and study the sign-post of building. Of its condition there can be no doubt. It is ruinous, say most who glance up at it and hurry by. They mistake the jungle for decay. It is exuberance that has unbalanced it. The classical facade is riven, but the force is far other than corruption's. The calm but somewhat low forehead of Zeus is cloven—and thence Pallas. The fault of our building is that it is dynamic. All architecture up to the present, save that of ships, and even they moved founded by their keels upon the waters, has been static. Our age is anabolically dynamic. The age of metal passes into the age of energy. The repose of proportioned architecture we can never hope to recover. We abandoned the petty

dynamics of Gothic ; we felt that was too absurd. Deliberately adopting a mask, we felt that it had better be unmistakably expressionless. It was better than with a simper of romance to pretend we were only a little made up, elderly people with an artful touch or two recovering their youth. At least no one can accuse us of imagining that we are Romans. As deliberately as grey kid for Town gloves, we have chosen from the wardrobe of history a style with which we ourselves have no organic connection. For the moment we are tired of modes and out of sympathy with revivals. Most sensible men simply want decency—though it is very questionable how far they get it. But merely wishing a problem to disappear because it can't be solved is no solution. We have to go on building. We may have no clear vision as to where we are going, but we cannot stand still. Stark building seems in itself to have its own life and evolution, regardless of our aims, proportions, building laws, and elevations. Like Natural Selection, all these things can only oppose, warp, thwart, but never control, the Life Force. Once again, as in the last Imperial phase, building is fighting for air, struggling to win to the surface, and this time " taste " is fortunately divided : there are, instead of one, so many aesthetic canons that their own

cross-fire silences them. The promise of an organic architecture is even greater. Look how fine are our buildings when they are building. It is only when we put the lid of style upon them that they are shut down into insignificance. When we see our age on its own plane, the lean derricks waving across the sky with their fine gear and tackle—as finished, significant, and balanced as the perfectly turned ceriphs on the lettering of a noble inscription—we expect such fingers of the Gods to build unprecedented palaces. Too restless, they build the most majestic vessels, engines that have an archaic splendour beside which Karnak is the work of mud-pie makers, but the houses are random recollections, the scamped work of a mind bored with anything that will not move.

So there is nothing barbarous in this. It is a natural evolution, and has respectable ancestry. Mr. Geoffrey Scott in his *Architecture of Humanism* maintains that Baroque is a culmination: it is "psychological" architecture. This, however, means an architecture framed to impress, an architecture to be looked at from decent, prescribed distances and never to be penetrated or analysed. Such a use of psychology is familiar to readers of late theology: it is the mistake of Modernism. Psychology cannot be used to prevent the mind from analysing what it experiences.

It must go deeper, not less deep than ordinary conviction. If behind the screen there is no rampart, or below it foundation, psychology will not make them. The fact that great masters worked in the Baroque is not to show that it is a supreme style, but that they had exhausted all the potentialities of the materials they had inherited. No wonder they were driven to be scientists and engineers. They were striving to find a new material for their huge conceptions. They never found it. Michael Angelo wanted ferro-concrete. His work was a defiance of the older mediums, because his designs were so great, but he had no pleasure in sham. All the work of the Renaissance in architecture is but a beginning: the churches are only full-size models, experimental designs run up with all the temporary shifts of an Exhibition pavilion. No wonder such men liked to play about with stage scenery.

Granted, however, that the dynamic building of which we catch glimpses should come to its full attainment, will one day not be dismantled but left itself as the end, because of its nature it would not rest there. The static phase of architecture over, the long arrested spirit of man might take up his house and walk. Our vessels, motors, and engines grow vaster and still increase in speed. The static, tap-rooted phase of cities is but a

chapter in our social lives. In themselves the greatest cities are by now become, for their present purposes, accidental in site, founded for some long out-grown convenience and continued in from inertia, incoherent in plan, heterogeneous in inhabitants. While we watch, the yeast begins to work in them, the buildings effervesce, and with accentuated force the lines spoken of a city, which, with a back-cloth of miracle-play, called itself Eternal, recur :

Disce hinc quid posset fortuna, immota labascunt,
Et quae perpetuo sunt fluitura, manent.

Medieval London lasted to the middle of the seventeenth century. Its successor not half as long. Baron Haussmann's importance is that he destroyed Paris, the capital of France : his stop-gap improvisation of a Wellsian Pleasure City is insignificant. Man and the Seine between them will move it away, probably in our life time. Every generation will see less permanence. Already there is an Imperial architect who moves whole buildings the better to group them. He is one of our best, and in this without doubt is showing that he is a man of his age with enough creative power to live up to the possibilities of modern dynamics. The Americans have long been familiar with the idea. We may live to change our buildings as quickly as a woman her clothes.

Will motors set the style of dress? There is of course already the chauffeur, centaurwise half-groom, half-yachtsman. But he is only a temporary blend, and artificial at that. The true influence of the motor is to be looked for elsewhere. Even in the archaic stage of motor design there are two authentic indications that this is a real architecture. Colour was at once recovered. The carriage and its nationalised relation the cab went black in the dark hour of industrialism. Motor bodies at once resumed the brave paint originally put on to match the clothes within. And now the invariable influence of architecture on costume is beginning to show. If you want to see the smartest male fashions do not go to Savile Row. The tailor dresses as the man of twenty years ago. But in Great Portland Street, and indeed beside every painted and varnished motor, may be found its genius, no murky mechanic but a youth as perfectly turned out, as advanced in his fashion, as the limousine in whose panels he is reflected. But, if living beside a car has already had such effect, how much greater modification may be expected when the association becomes more intimate, and man is seldom visible outside the machine, when it is his clothing? If, like a snail possessed, we learn to carry a rushing house everywhere with us, it will

be our costume and habit. Already the centre of interest in domestic building shifts and narrows. Already "nice people" prefer to live in a cottage and keep a good car. Soon the *pied-à-terre* will be raised and the vestigial remnant of Home be a locker in a golf club or a reserved parking plot on a favourite common. Living in a home which closely encompasses us and everywhere accompanies us, we cannot escape great modification. Architecture has affected clothes, clothes have modified anatomy. The razor, the corset, and the boot are only clumsy initial efforts to reduce our barbarian bodies to something smooth and delicate, which we have never been. After violent and ignorant short cuts, comes manipulative surgery, facial operations, and other interferences. This method will give way to graftings, and finally with endocrine dosages and the other powers of the new bio-chemical pharmacopaea we may change our frame as once our fashions. The control of the pituitary body, which seems to have the hair of the body as its province, might at a stroke put every barber out of business. All the while this is no idle fluctuation. the slow wash of life drifting up and down. There is a purpose in what the Puritan loves to denounce as empty vanity. There is the constant aim at reduction of mass. The centre of the vortex when there is

perfect transmission, may itself appear empty. Physically, evolution passing out of us, our bodies may actually be on the way to disappear. With the house, the wardrobe, and the tool-chest, we have already begun to lay aside our fur, our nails, our teeth. But progress is still slow, for even on the threshold of the motor age we yet carry ourselves, yet bear with us a clumsy distillery of intestinal coils of which our laboratories, had our diet been scientific, would have relieved us long ago. The hermit crab abandons his own plate armour when he finds a better shield in some one else's shell. We shall make a great leap forward when we have fully evolved machinery and motors by living in them. Indeed, what then is to prevent us fulfilling Mr. Wells stupendous prophecy and becoming like the Martians only tentacled brains? This is not to say that we should become inhuman and horrible. Nice people of that day, it is certain would be as disgusted at the sight of a man outside his machine as a Victorian lady at such a vision on the beach, or a normal man at sight of the brain through the decent, familiar hair and skin that cover it. Then, as the reaction of mind and matter never can cease, the machine would grow smaller to suit the condensation of the ever less encumbered, more intense spirit. The time machine takes a step

forward and we see a world about which fly swarms of bright little clock-work organisms, opening like small watches their cases, spreading irridescent wings, closing and settling. There will be no Brobdignagian naturalists then, but could such net a specimen, at the centre he would find, at the heart of the springs, a small, opalescent body. In the end :

Dominus non in fortudine equi voluntatem habebit nec in tibiis viri beneplacitum erit ei.

So we must end as life began an idea implicit at the heart of matter ; deep down a complete energy, on the surface a calm, complete condensation. Supreme sublimation, the spun stuff at length so fine, that Clotho can at last throw a gossamer which the shears of Atropos cannot sever.

So much for prophecy. What actually will happen who can say—we who cannot even tell if next year well-dressed men will have two or three or even four buttons on their sleeves ? One thing alone seems established ; however they may develop, clothes are an authentic part of that eternal Becoming which is Life.

Such are the root-endings of the strange subject of costume which many think, because on the surface it looks withered, they could brush off like the dust. So deep and difficult, patiently considered becomes even " the nice conduct of a clouded cane."

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